ALA American Library Association

Booklist Reader

Booklist
Leading book discovery
November 2025

Book and audiobook recommendations for all ages

Recent Crafts & Gardening Books

Listen-Alikes: Angeline Boulley's *Sisters in the Wind*

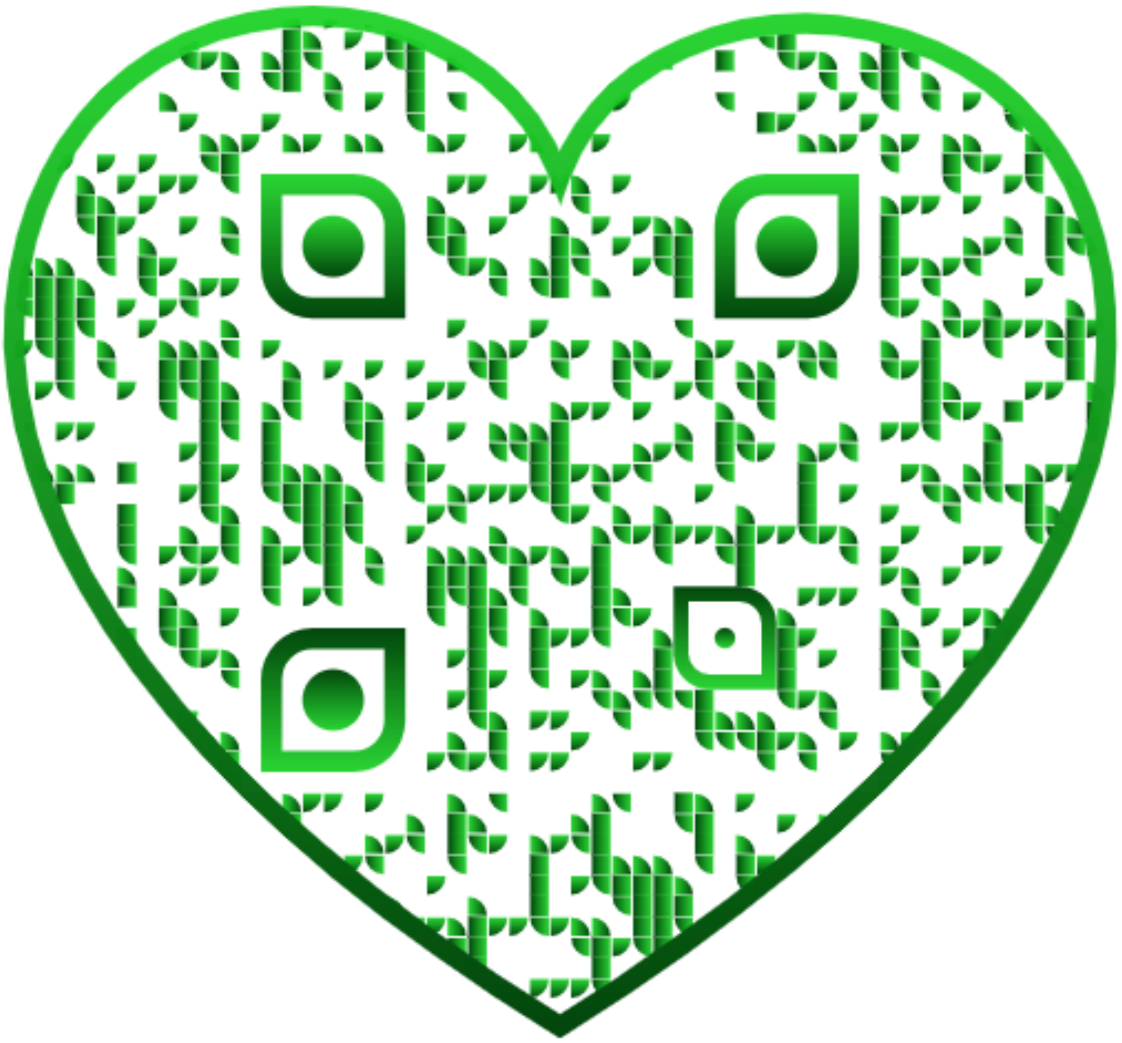
Foodie Rival Romance

Top 10 Picture-Book Read-Alouds

Art by Jaya Miceli, from *Cursed Daughters*, by Oyinkan Braithwaite

PBS BOOKS

LIBRARY READS



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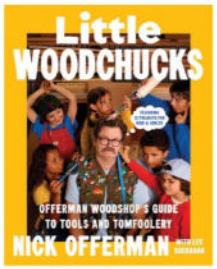

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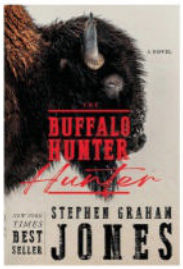

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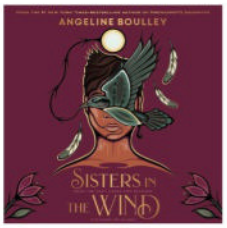

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On the Cover: From *Cursed Daughters*, by Oyinkan Braithwaite; see Reserve These Reads, p. 8. Cover designed by Jaya Miceli. Used with permission by Doubleday, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

From the Publisher

I'm writing this during Banned Books Week, which was October 5–11 this year. Consequently, I've been thinking about censorship more than I usually do (which is already a good amount). It's stating the obvious that censoring and banning books restrict our freedom to read and to access information, and this is counter to our rights here in America. Freedom to read is one of the pillars of our democracy and it is complementary to our freedom of speech, one of our precious First Amendment rights. When I peruse books at the library, there are many that I'm not personally interested in reading, but it gives me joy that these books are available and may spark interest in others. No one is forcing anyone to read books they do not want to read; to censor or ban books is an outright violation of our rights. If these ideas ring true to you, please visit www.bannedbooksweek.org.

—George Kendall
gkendall@ala.org

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Top 10

Food Books

Not only shining examples of cookbooks and food writing, these extraordinary books also look at the how and the why, the history and the philosophy of what we eat.

All Consuming: Why We Eat the Way We Eat Now. By Ruby Tandoh. 2025. Knopf.

This fascinating cultural history traces the many forces that determine how we discover new foods, how we shop, how we cook, and how our relationship with food has evolved since the 1940s.

Good Things: Recipes and Rituals to Share with People You Love. By Samin Nosrat. 2025. Random.

Nosrat's long-awaited follow-up to *Salt Fat Acid Heat* (2017) is a collection of essential recipes and kitchen wisdom that celebrates cooking as an opportunity for connection and community.

How the World Eats: A Global Food Philosophy. By Julian Baggini. 2025. Pegasus.

Baggini proposes seven principles to guide worldwide food production and consumption: holism, circularity, pluralism, food-centrism, resourcefulness, compassion, and equitability.

How to Cook the Finest Things in the Sea: Broil, Bake, Poach & Grill Your Way to Exceptional Fish & Shellfish. By Ari Kolender. 2025. Artisan.

Covering everything from ingredients to prep and the background basics required to create a delicious feast from creatures of the sea, this decisive tome will appeal to a wide array of home cooks.

How to Share an Egg: A True Story of Hunger, Love, and Plenty. By Bonny Reichert. 2025. Ballantine.

An often-harrowing but ultimately life-affirming story of family bonds, food, and love, the tale of Reichert's father's survival of the Holocaust is also the memoir of her own life's journey.

Kalaya's Southern Thai Kitchen. By Nok Suntaranon. 2024. Clarkson Potter.

Chef and restaurateur Suntaranon gives readers fabulous recipes alongside stories of her life inspired by the courage, determination, and creativity of her mother, Kalaya.

Art from *Real Japanese Cooking* and *All Consuming*.

The League of Kitchens Cookbook: Brilliant Tips, Secret Methods, and Favorite Family Recipes from around the World. By Lisa Kyung Gross. 2024. Harvest.

Years of running a unique, cross-cultural cooking school have given birth to one of the most diverse and entertaining cookbooks imaginable, with recipes and stories from myriad foodways.

My (Half) Latinx Kitchen: Half Recipes, Half Stories, All Latin American. By Kiera Wright-Ruiz. 2025. Harvest.

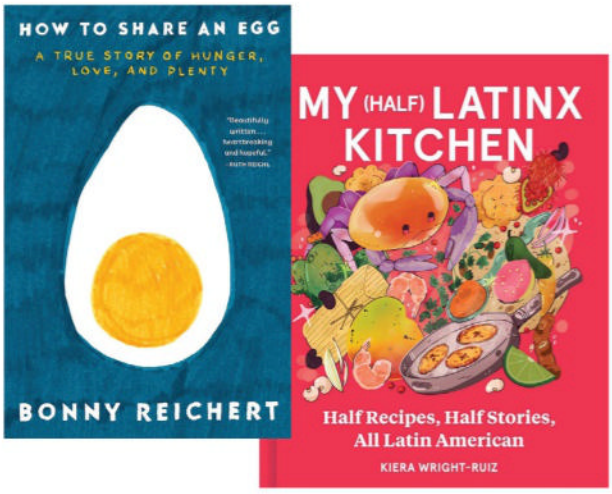
Readers will be easily drawn into Wright-Ruiz's story of her complex upbringing and the recipes that helped her get through difficult times, a cookbook that also reads like a graphic novel memoir.

Pan y Dulce: The Latin American Baking Book (Pastries, Desserts, Rustic Breads, Savory Baking, and More). By Bryan Ford. 2024. Little, Brown/Voracious.

With recipes representing every country in Latin America, Ford's book radiates warmth, love, and passion. There is so much to be learned here besides how to make bread.

Real Japanese Cooking: Traditions, Tips, Techniques and over 600 Authentic Recipes. By Makiko Itoh. 2025. Tuttle.

In "the only Japanese cookbook you will ever need," Itoh takes the time to explain the culture, ingredients, celebrations, and beliefs behind Japanese foodways and customs.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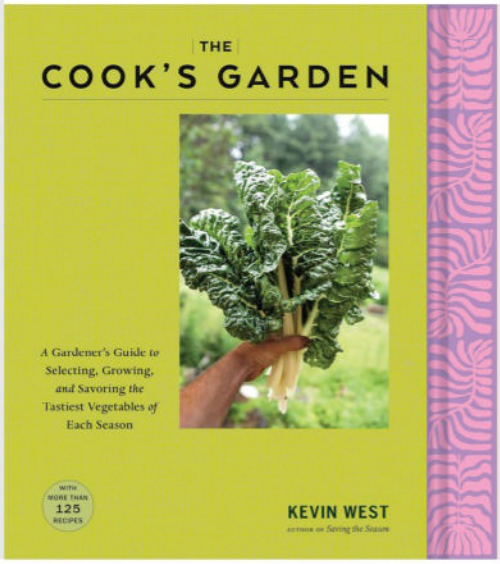
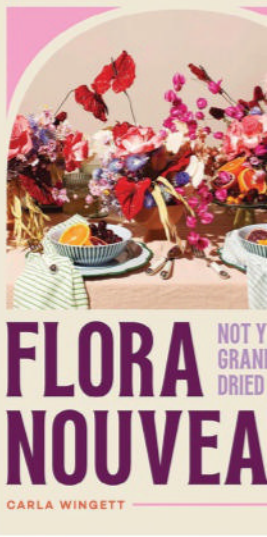
A TRUE STORY OF HUNGER, LOVE, AND PLENTY
BONNY REICHERT
MY (HALF) LATINX KITCHEN
Half Recipes, Half Stories, All Latin American
KIERA WRIGHT-RUIZ

Recent Crafts & Gardening Books

by Susan Maguire

Find inspiration and instruction in these recent books about crafts and gardening that run the gamut from woodworking and growing vegetables to rug hooking and needle felting. In these pages, discover how to build a Little Free Library, perfect the art of gift-giving, and sew a really cute Grim Reaper. Truly, something for everyone!


THE
COOK'S GARDEN
A Gardener's Guide to Selecting, Growing, and Savoring the Tastiest Vegetables of Each Season
KEVIN WEST



The Cook's Garden: A Gardener's Guide to Selecting, Growing, and Savoring the Tastiest Vegetables of Each Season. By Kevin West. 2025. Knopf.

Combining a gardening how-to and a cookbook, *The Cook's Garden* highlights advice on planning a garden you actually have time to tend with detailed tips on things like weather and soil and chapters devoted to individual vegetables, featuring how to grow and prepare them. Practical and inspirational.

Felt Craft Fun: 16 Adorable Kawaii-Style Projects to Stitch, Share, and Love All Year Long. By Jessica DeVos. 2025. Schiffer.

Everything looks cuter with a little face on it, and these felt-appliqué patterns in the popular kawaii style are suitable for beginners and more advanced crafters alike, ranging from the natural (flowers, mushroom terrarium) to the supernatural (UFO, mermaid) to seasonal designs (Grim Reaper, tree farm).

Flora Nouveaux: Not Your Grandma's Dried Flowers. By Carla Wingett. 2025. Chronicle.

The 21 projects here, illustrated by brilliant full-color photographs, bear little resemblance to the sad bouquets of old. Rather, they act as a contemporary art form that can mirror any décor or design period, from a valentine garland to a flower-inspired cocktail.

How to Build Your Very Own Little Free Library: 11 Mini Structures You Can Build. By Little Free Library and Philip Schmidt. 2025. Quarto/Cool Springs.

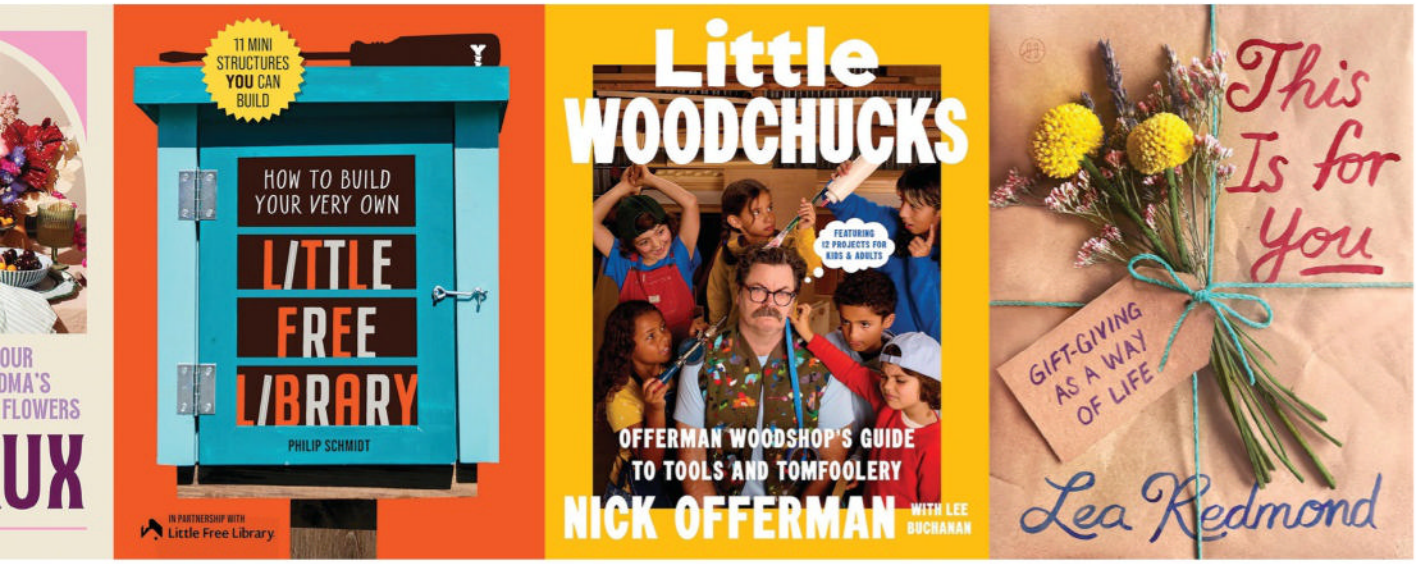
From Antarctica to Poland, there are more than 200,000 registered Little Free Libraries and likely many, many more unregistered. This book includes all readers need to know to create their own, covering instructions, tools, and materials, including one made from an upcycled kitchen cabinet.

Indian Block Printing: An Inspirational Project Book. By Holly Jones and Tess Grace. 2025. Bloomsbury/Herbert.

With photographic essays about Indian experts in Bagru, the process of natural dye printing, and the history of women block carvers, inspiration becomes reality in this how-to guide to Indian block printing. Fifteen projects, from a tote bag to a tablecloth to printed cards, are detailed alongside well-explained tips.

Landscape Rug Hooking: A Painterly Approach to Creating the Landscapes You Love. By Deanne Fitzpatrick. 2025. Schiffer.

Rooted in North American tradition, rug hooking is


11 MINI STRUCTURES YOU CAN BUILD
HOW TO BUILD YOUR VERY OWN
LITTLE FREE LIBRARY
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OFFERMAN WOODSHOP'S GUIDE TO TOOLS AND TOMFOOLERY
NICK OFFERMAN WITH LEE BUCHANAN
This Is for You
GIFT-GIVING AS A WAY OF LIFE
Lea Redmond

presented here as an intuitive practice that values process and personal expression over rigid planning. Full of photographs that vividly illustrate landscapes translated into fiber, this book is organized to support both learning and creativity.

Little Woodchucks: Offerman Woodshop's Guide to Tools and Tomfoolery. By Nick Offerman and Lee Buchanan. 2025. Dutton.

From popular actor and author Offerman and his lifelong woodshop comrade Buchanan comes an irresistible invitation to children and families to learn the art of woodworking. Twelve simple, appealing projects guide children ages six to ten and their grown-ups through learning the foundations of this time-honored craft.

The Manga Guide to Organic Vegetable Gardening: Detailed Tips for Growing 50 Types of Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs. By Hideki Yoda. 2025. Tuttle.

This unique guide, illustrated in manga style, instructs readers on the basics of starting a garden and growing specific produce (from tomatoes to bitter melons), told through the journey of a gardening family who interject important points, tips, and background information throughout.

Needle Felting Art: 12 Mixed-Media Woodland Projects to Paint and Sew. By Jo Lochhead. 2025. Search.

Lochhead teaches needle felting, the art of shaping wool by poking it with a needle, then adding painted and sewn elements. With illustrations and explanations for using templates and stencils, doing basic stitches, and choosing the right tools, this guide is ideal for beginners who are ready to bring nature-inspired projects to life.

The Quilting Book: A Step-By-Step Guide to Patchwork and Quilting. By Christina West and Kacey Crutchfield. 2025. DK.

This book is perfect for those with no background knowledge in quilting or textile work, offering how-to's with extensive pictures and clear directions on everything from needle types to the proper way to cut fabric and quilting patterns that show a variety of skills and types of customization.

This Is for You: Gift Giving as a Way of Life. By Lea Redmond. 2025. HarperOne.

Multidisciplinary creator Redmond pens a compelling explanation of gift giving illustrated by her charming line drawings, delving into the reasons for gifting; listing a variety of ways to create a personalized gift, including low- and no-cost items; and sharing abundant ideas like Earth-conscious wrapping options.

Art by jomphon / Adobe Stock.

Art from *Lone Women*.

Read-alikes

Stephen Graham Jones' *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter*

By Susan Maguire

Horror readers know Stephen Graham Jones is one of the most exciting voices writing today. Drawing on his Blackfeet heritage, he mines the depths of tradition, colonialism, and the horror genre itself in his terrifying and surprisingly hopeful works. His breakout hit, *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter*, tells the story of Good Stab, a Blackfeet vampire who roams the Montana prairie in 1912 looking for vengeance and whose increasingly tense and violent confessions are told through the journals of a Lutheran minister of the time. Tracing the real-life 1870 Marias Massacre, this is a story of heartbreak, revenge, and terror. Read-alikes include historical horror and poignant works by Native authors, sure to capture the attention of readers who want to explore more work like Jones'.

The Haunting of Room 904. By Erika T. Wurth. 2025. Flatiron.

As in *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter*, Wurth frames her story around an 1800s massacre of Indigenous people in the U.S., but this horror novel takes a much different approach, focusing on a present-day paranormal investigator called to look into a cycle of violence in a Denver hotel that goes back generations.

The Hunger. By Alma Katsu. 2018. Putnam.

In this suspenseful and imaginative take on the Donner party tragedy, Katsu injects a supernatural explanation at the heart of the ill-fated quest. In 1846, the Donner party sets out to cross the American West, and, amid interpersonal drama, something sinister is awaiting the group on the trail.

In the Valley of the Sun. By Andy Davidson. 2017. Skyhorse.

Though set a little closer to the present (1980), Davidson's take on the vampire novel is a lyrical modern western, dripping with atmosphere in the story of a bad guy who strikes up an awkward friendship with a widow and her son while a Texas Ranger is hot on his trail.

James. By Percival Everett. 2024. Doubleday.

James seems like an unlikely read-alike for a historical vampire novel, but both books encourage readers to look more closely at American history and the dehumanizing violence perpetrated against BIPOC people. Here, Huck Finn's enslaved companion tells his own story, revealing an honorable man with relentless courage and moral clarity.

Lone Women. By Victor LaValle. 2023. One World.

In 1915, Montana allows unmarried Black women the opportunity to claim a homestead, so Adelaide Henry sets off with a securely locked trunk containing her family's curse. Like *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter*, this is thought-

provoking horror that probes the inherent terror of marginalization.

The Lost Journals of Sacajewea. By Debra Magpie Earling. 2023. Milkweed.

In this challenging and rewarding book that, like *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter*, looks at American history through a Native lens, Sacajewea tells her story, from a happy childhood to her capture by invaders to her work with Lewis and Clark, whose expedition exploited and despoiled the land she reveres.

The Only Good Indians. By Stephen Graham Jones. 2020. Saga.

The Only Good Indians reads like the modern counterpart to *The Buffalo Hunter Hunter*, and readers who appreciate Jones' narrative skill will relish this tale of a hunting party gone awry when a group of young Blackfeet hunt elk on land forbidden to them, and who are then stalked by a supernatural force.

The Reformatory. By Tananarive Due. 2023. Saga.

Set amid the horrors of Jim Crow Florida, Due's extraordinary work alternates perspectives between a young woman whose brother was sent to a horrific reform school and the boy himself, who can see ghosts and learns that human monsters are far more terrifying than the supernatural.

Sisters of the Lost Nation. By Nick Medina. 2023. Berkley.

Medina roots his contemporary horror novel about the crisis of missing Indigenous women in the story of a high-school senior who works at her Louisiana reservation's casino, where she witnesses the comings and goings of nefarious men who may be tied to a spate of disappearances, while she believes she is being stalked by a horror from tribal myth.

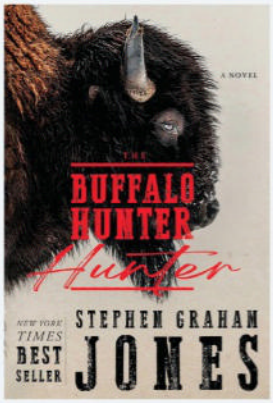
Vampires of El Norte. By Isabel Cañas.

Readers looking for another horror novel full of enlightening historical details that touches on the terrors of colonialism should pick up Cañas' latest, which is a lush tale of vampires and vaqueros during the Mexican-American conflict of 1846–48, featuring star-crossed lovers and blood-thirsty monsters.

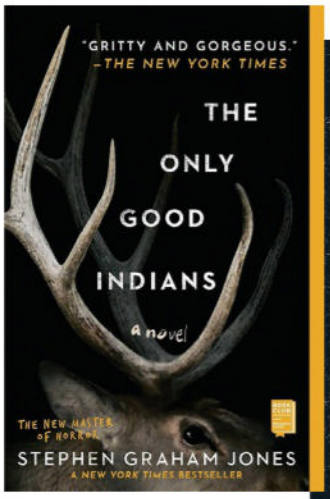
Wandering Stars. By Tommy Orange. 2024. Knopf.

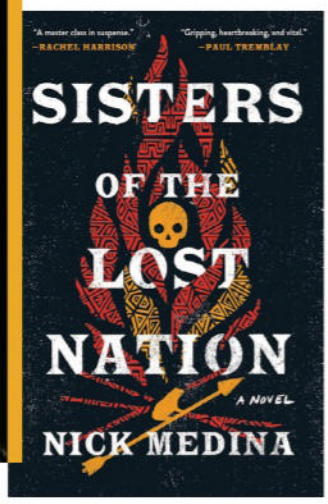
Like Jones, Orange uses the real-life horrors of Native history to tell his story, albeit without the horror-genre trappings. *Wandering Stars* spans centuries, opening during "America's longest war" (313 years of settlers' attempts to annihilate Native people) and touching on the Carlisle Indian School and present-day troubles, a tender yet eviscerating history of one family's survival through the generations.

The Buffalo Hunter Hunter. By Stephen Graham Jones. 2025. Saga.



"What I am is the Indian who can't die. I'm the worst dream America ever had." So says Good Stab, a Blackfeet vampire who roams the Montana prairie in 1912 looking for vengeance, to Lutheran minister Arthur Beaucarne, whom he visits each Sunday to give his confession. The book is told through the journals of Beaucarne—records of the minister's own life but also Good Stab's confessions—as read by the pastor's great-great-granddaughter, Etsy, a hundred years later. Jones (*I Was a Teenage Slasher*, 2024) immediately immerses the reader in his harrowing world. Tracing the Marias Massacre of 1870 and recalling the atrocities inflicted on the buffalo and the Native people, the story charts the growing explicitness of each Good Stab confession, each one increasingly tense, violent, and accusatory, while Beaucarne begins to unravel and reveal his own horrific secrets, secrets that reach across time to Etsy. A riveting story of heartbreak, death, and revenge, this remarkable work of American fiction, a thought-provoking tale filled with existential terror, unease, and a high body count, transforms, in Jones' deft hands, from the unapologetic horror novel it most certainly is into a critique of the entire idea of the United States—a critique that, despite the horrors, both real and supernatural, is forcefully infused with both heart and hope. —*Becky Spratford*





Reserve These Reads

Adult

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this month.

Fiction

Best Offer Wins. By Marisa Kashino. Celadon.

In this much-talked-about debut, real-estate journalist Kashino notches the drama (and laughs) up to 11 as a woman resorts to increasingly unhinged tactics to snag the house of her dreams. Skewering class, ambition, and the DC housing market, this one is for readers who like dark humor and a hero you'll root for even as you cringe at her behavior.

Brigands & Breadknives. By Travis Baldree. Tor.

The third cozy fantasy set in Baldree's beloved Legends & Lattes universe (after *Bookshops & Bonedust*) follows foul-mothed rattkin bookseller Fern's attempt to open up shop in a new city. But that's just the beginning, as Fern finds herself in the company of a ragtag, motley crew that must fend off various villains to protect one of its own.

Cursed Daughters. By Oyinkan Braithwaite. Doubleday.

Following up *My Sister, the Serial Killer* (2018), Braithwaite introduces a woman in contemporary Lagos trying to outrun her supposed fate—her family thinks she is a reincarnated cousin—and a generational curse that destines the women in her family to heartbreak.

The Eleventh Hour: A Quintet of Stories. By Salman Rushdie. Random.

In his first work of fiction since he was violently attacked in 2022, Rushdie offers stories of characters forming connections while confronting death in many forms. These five stories span his stomping grounds of India, England, and the U.S., including the Mumbai neighborhood featured in his modern classic, *Midnight's Children*.

The King's Ransom. By Janet Evanovich. Atria.

Evanovich's second Gabriela Rose thriller (after *The Recovery Agent*) finds the recovery agent searching the globe for stolen artwork in the company of her ex-husband in order to save his cousin from certain ruin.

Nash Falls. By David Baldacci. Grand Central.

The first in a new series from Baldacci follows a mild-mannered businessman who discovers the company he works for is up to no good and, when his perfect life is destroyed, he turns to violence for revenge. This is the master of the thriller at the top of his game.

Palaver. By Bryan Washington. Farrar.

A gay man who has taken refuge in Tokyo after his mother apparently chooses his homophobic brother is surprised when she, a decade since they've seen each other, shows up on his doorstep in prize-winning author Washington's third novel, which spans to Houston and Jamaica as well as Japan.

Queen Esther. By John Irving. Simon & Schuster.

Irving returns to the orphanage in St. Cloud's, Maine (last seen in *The Cider House Rules*), where, in the early 1900s, Dr. Larch takes in a young Jewish woman whose life is marked by antisemitic violence.

The Seven Rings. By Nora Roberts. St. Martin's.

In the conclusion to Roberts' Lost Bride trilogy (which started with *Inheritance* and continued in *The Mirror*), a woman who inherited a haunted house must, with the help of her boyfriend and their friends, solve her ancestor's mystery while contending with a jealous witch.

Son of the Morning. By Akwaeke Emezi. Avon.

Emezi tackles the booming romantasy genre in a tale set in the South featuring tenderhearted Galilee, who knows she's different, and the not-quite-human guardian of a powerful artifact. Loyalties are tested, intense attraction simmers, and secrets clash in this bold, romantic fantasy.

Art from *Queen Esther* and *The American Revolution*.

Nonfiction

The American Revolution: An Intimate History. By Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns. Knopf.

This richly illustrated history of the American Revolution expands on the six-part PBS documentary airing in November, told through the eyes of Founding Fathers, soldiers, women, African Americans, Native Americans, and American Loyalists.

Book of Lives: A Memoir of Sorts. By Margaret Atwood. Doubleday.

From a wild, nomadic childhood to a creative adulthood, the first memoir from Atwood, author of *The Handmaid's Tale* and other seminal novels, makes connections between art and real life.

Cher: Part Two. By Cher. Dey Street.

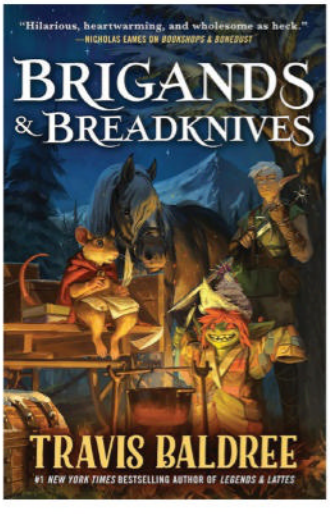
Last year's *Cher: Part One* was a blast, and the second volume of Cher's memoirs covers even more of her interesting, fabulous life, from her award-winning film career to her smash hits of the nineties and aughts.

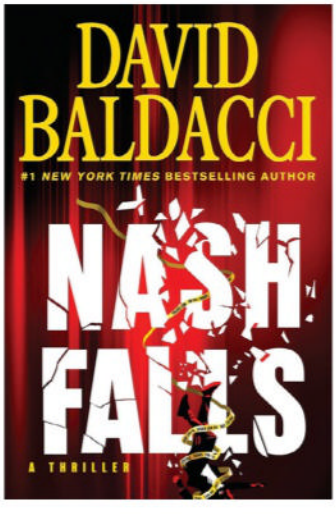
The Look. By Michelle Obama. Crown.

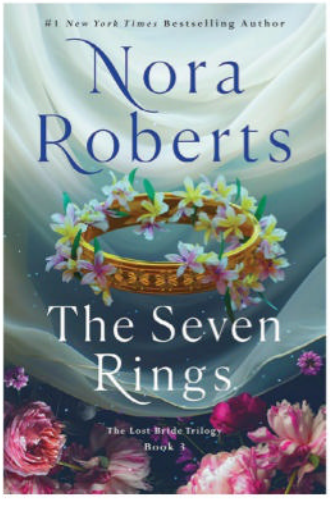
Rather than another memoir, the former First Lady and author of the blockbuster *Becoming* presents this volume of her evolving style as a public figure. Lavishly illustrated with over 200 photographs, *The Look* shows how fashion can uplift and affirm personal values.

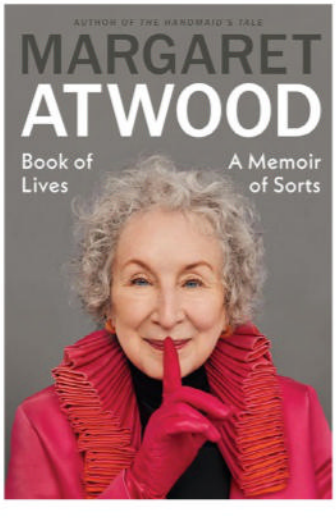
Something from Nothing: A Cookbook. By Alison Roman. Clarkson Potter.

Roman's next cookbook, following the best-sellers *Nothing Fancy* and *Sweet Enough*, is sure to be her most pantry-reliant yet, reveling in minimal ingredients and effort for maximum flavor.


"Hilarious, heartwarming, and wholesome as heck."
—NICHOLAS EAMES ON BOOKSHOPS & BONEDUST
BRIGANDS & BREADKNIVES
TRAVIS BALDREE
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF LEGENDS & LATTES







November 2025

The Top Ten Adult Fiction and Nonfiction Chosen Monthly by America's Library Staff

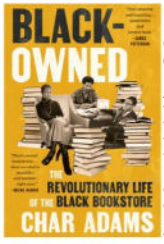
Find out more at www.LibraryReads.org

I, Medusa
Ayana Gray
(Random House)

TOP PICK

Medusa—legend, myth, monster—was once an innocent girl named Meddy who longed to see the world beyond her island. Meddy is a mortal born of two immortal sea gods in Poseidon's kingdom. When she catches the attention of the goddess Athena and is taken on as an acolyte in her temple, she thinks she has found her purpose, but a misstep angers the Gods and she becomes Medusa. A feminist tale that will capture readers' attention from the first page.

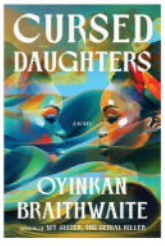
—Kimberly McGee, Lake Travis Community Library, Austin, TX
NoveList read-alike: *Medusa* by Nataly Gruender



Black-Owned:The Revolutionary Life of the Black Bookstore
Char Adams
(Tiny Reparations Books)

An extremely informative and well-researched book on a worthy topic.This comprehensive work looks at Black history in the United States through the lens of Black-owned bookstores, covering their functions as pillars of community engagement and social justice organizations as well. Readers will appreciate the book recommendations and the bookstores listed in the endnotes.

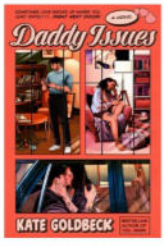
—Autumn Raw, Hennepin County Library, MN
NoveList read-alike: *Prose to the People* by Katie Mitchell



Cursed Daughters: A Novel
Oyinkan Braithwaite
(Doubleday Books)

Eniiyi has been haunted her entire life by her strong resemblance to her mother's cousin Monife, who drowned shortly before Eniiyi's birth. She has also been told that the women of her family are cursed to never find lasting romantic happiness. Is there any way for her to break free of her family's painful past? A beautifully told and emotional page-turner about confronting family trauma and finding peace and forgiveness along the way.

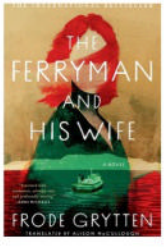
—Mara Bandy Fass, Champaign Public Library, IL
NoveList read-alike: *My Mother Cursed My Name* by Anamely Salgado Reyes



Daddy Issues: A Novel
Kate Goldbeck
(Dial Press Trade Paperbacks)

The pandemic blew up every plan Sam ever had post-college, and now she's stuck living with her mom, working a deadbeat job. Her sad status quo is disrupted when Nick moves in next door with his young daughter. As Sam confronts her relationship with her father, she starts a relationship with Nick. This romance hits on the ways the pandemic affected everyone's lives.

—Olivia Wojnar, Seymour Public Library, NY
NoveList read-alike: *Totally and Completely Fine* by Elissa Sussman



The Ferryman and His Wife
Frode Grytten
(Algonquin Books)

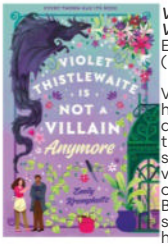
This tale of a widowed Norwegian ferryman's last day of life is simple, quiet, and effortlessly moving. Nils navigates through his cherished memories, converses with the dead, and reevaluates his connection to all who crossed his path, whether in a single trip across the forge or a decades-long marriage.

—Sharon Layburn, South Huntington Public Library, NY
NoveList read-alike: *The Buried Giant* by Kazuo Ishiguro

Best Offer Wins
Marisa Kashino
(Celadon Books)

The housing market can be murder. Find out how far one woman will go when she sets her sights on her dream home. And just when it seems our main character, Margot, can't surprise any more, she stuns readers once again. Once you settle in with this deliciously dark and twisty thriller, you won't be able to look away.

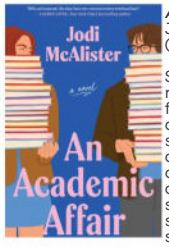
—Jennifer Winberry, Hunterdon County Library, NJ
NoveList read-alike: *The Sequel* by Jean Hanff Korelitz



Violet Thistlewaite Is Not a Villain Anymore
Emily Krempholtz
(Ace)

Violet's a witch who used her powers for terror and destruction as a sidekick to the ultimate bad guy. Now she's moved into a small village and is trying to start over, running a flower shop. But her landlord doesn't seem to like her, and it's hard to cover up the past. Can she be "good" and make her new life a success? This is a sweet, cozy romantasy.

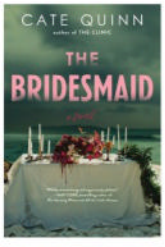
—Jayna McDaniel-Browning, Delaware County. Dist. Library, OH
NoveList read-alike: *A Witch's Guide to Magical Innkeeping* by Sangu Mandanna



An Academic Affair
Jodi McAlister
(Atria)

Sadie and Jonah start off as rivals faking a relationship for job security, and accidentally fall into something real, messy, and deeply felt. With a sharp critique of institutional academia and a great sister-drama subplot, this is set to be one of the smartest, sexiest romances of the year.

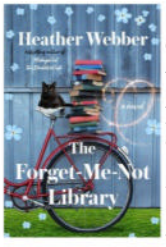
—India Cureau, Cary Memorial Library, MA
NoveList read-alike: *Taste the Love* by Karelia Stetz-Waters



The Bridesmaid
Cate Quinn
(Sourcebooks Landmark)

The Kensingtons invite you to the society wedding of the decade. There's just one hitch. You might not make it out alive. This book is full of intrigue and suspense that will draw readers into the pitfalls of high-society life, where nothing matters more than your social media clicks and lavish parties. Great characters and a shocking ending.

—Karen Troutman, LibraryReads Ambassador, IN
NoveList read-alike: *A Killer Wedding* by Joan O'Leary



The Forget-Me-Not Library
Heather Webber
(St. Martin's Press)

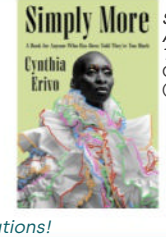
Tallulah and Juliet are in need of healing and love from friends and family, and the town of Forget-Me-Not offers that in spades! The lovely townsfolk want nothing but the best for their community and those in need of its special magic. Perfect for readers who want a cozy, magical read to soothe away the troubles of the real world.

—Carmen Hughey, Greenville County Library System, SC
NoveList read-alike: *The Book Charmer* by Karen Hawkins

Bonus pick:

Lucky Seed
Justinian Huang
(MIRA)

Notable Nonfiction:



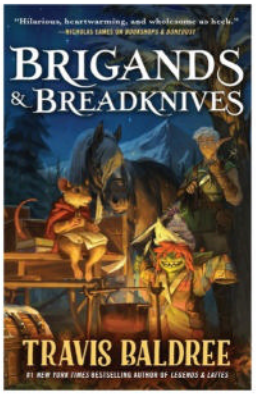
Simply More: A Book for Anyone Who Has Been Told They're Too Much
Cynthia Erivo
(Flatiron Books)

Be sure to check out our social media for the Bonus Pick annotations!

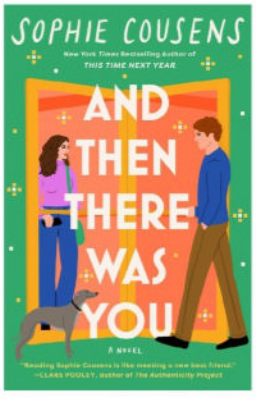
Made in LibraryAware - www.libraryaware.com

November 2025
HALL OF FAME TITLES

The LibraryReads Hall of Fame designation honors authors who have had multiple titles appear on the monthly list since 2013.



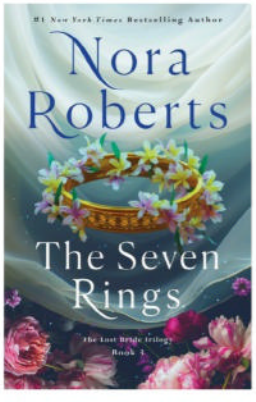
Brigands & Breadknives
Travis Baldree
(Tor Books)



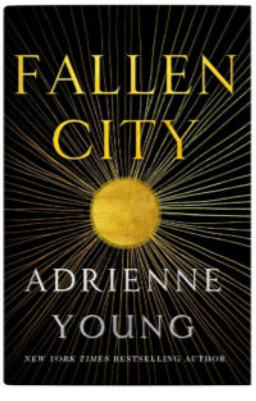
And Then There Was You
Sophie Cousens
(Putnam)

Second Chance Romance: A Harlot's Bay Novel
Olivia Dade
(Avon)

The Burning Library
Gilly Macmillan
(William Morrow)



The Seven Rings: The Lost Bride Trilogy, Book 3
Nora Roberts
(St. Martin's Press)



Fallen City
Adrienne Young
(Saturday Books)

Find out more at www.LibraryReads.org/HOF

10 Questions

Ashley Poston

by John Charles

Ashley Poston is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *A Novel Love Story*, *The Seven Year Slip*, and *The Dead Romantics*. A native of South Carolina, she lives in a small gray house with her sassy cat and too many books. You can find her on the internet, somewhere, watching cat videos and reading fan fiction.

1. Who is Ashley Poston when she is at home?
At home, Ashley Poston—just Ash, usually—wanders around her house singing to her three cats. Sometimes she's painting the walls of her house, other times she's rearranging furniture, but she's always thinking about ways to unsnarl plot threads. She gets up in the morning, usually because her eldest cat, Moose, chews on her hair until she feeds him, and fixes herself a pot of coffee. She sits on her back porch until the summer sun gets too muggy, and then she retires into the house to write. She starts with fanfic—always fanfic—before she gravitates over to her own work. Her uniform is sweatpants and a ratty t-shirt, and makeup becomes a lost art whenever she isn't Ashley Poston.

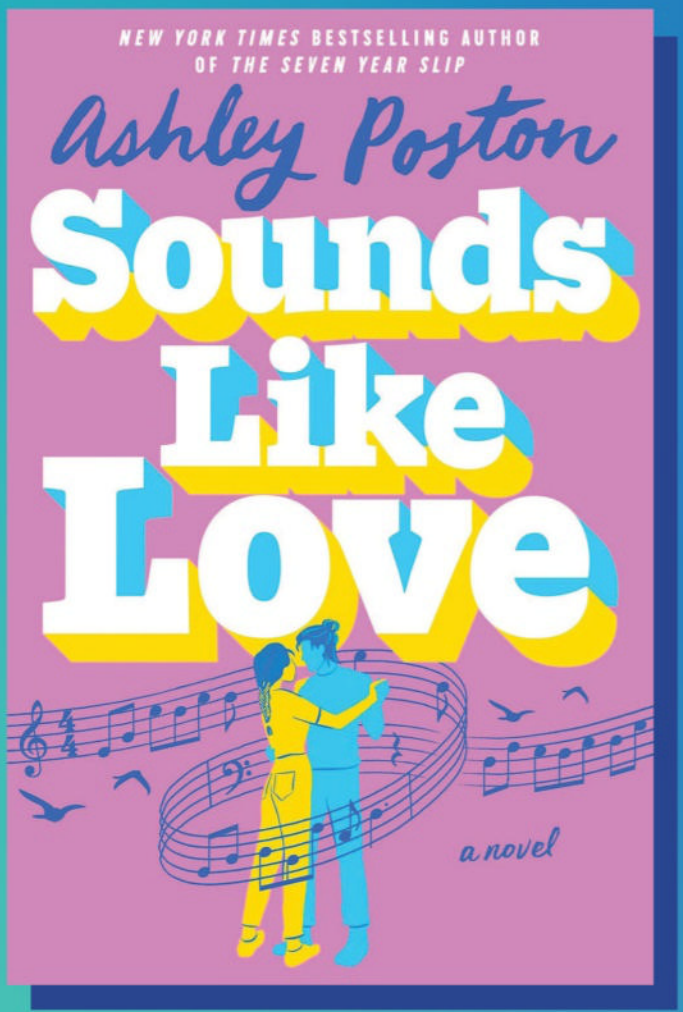
She likes being Ash. It's nice. Quiet. Anonymous, almost, if not for her parents constantly reminding everyone that "our daughter has a new book out, have you read it?" because they are her biggest fans.

Because of that, she likes being Ashley Poston, too. It's nice. Loud. A whirlwind of books and events and interviews and readers—so many lovely readers, reminding her that she isn't alone.

They're both good, just in different ways.

2. What can you tell us about **Sounds Like Love***?*
Sounds Like Love is my ode to creative burnout. The novel follows a burnt-out songwriter and a has-been musician who find themselves telepathically connected to each other through a mysterious song they can't get out of their heads.

3. What five words best describe **Sounds Like Love***?*
Music. Memory. Beach. Parents. Legacy.



4. Why is it important for you as an author to incorporate both lighter and darker aspects of life in your books?
I believe that the best love stories encompass all manners of love—the love in a relationship, but also the love of family, the love of a career, the love of a passion. And where there is love, there is the fear of losing it . . . and the grief when we inevitably do. I don't think you can love something without having to grieve it someday, and you can't grieve without having loved something immeasurably.

5. Does music play a role in your creative process? Is there a song that you believe can "fix almost anything?"
Music plays a very big role in my creative process! I always have playlists for my novels, and I listen to them before jumping into a chapter or an edit, jut so I can get myself back into that mindset.

I also wholeheartedly believe that there is a song that can fix almost everything—maybe not repair it like we think of "fixing" something, but a song that sits in the moment with us. A song that tells us, "yes, it's okay to feel."

6. What are the books that made you fall in love with the romance genre as a reader?
I think it was a slow fall into the romance genre. I first started in YA, with *Twilight* and Diana Wynne Jones and Meg Cabot and Holly Black. Though admittedly, my journey in Romance came from . . . fanfic. Fanfiction borrows a lot from romance—it reinvents tropes, it reimagines archetypes, and it applies to new, transformed stories. I loved that. And some fanfic authors cited books they drew inspiration from, and so I followed from there and dove in head-first. Paranormal romance, historical romance, contemporary, fantasy—I think my heart has always been in romance, I just needed to find my way there.

7. What role have libraries played in your life?
In college, I worked at my local library to help save up for a study abroad program that I ended up never going on. I loved working there—situating books on the shelves, putting them in order, sitting down between the stacks and reading my favorite parts of my favorite books. It was magical. I still miss it sometimes.

Ashley Poston
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE DEAD ROMANTICS
A GOOD MORNING AMERICA BOOK CLUB PICK
THE SEVEN YEAR SLIP
a novel
"ROMANTIC AND IRRESISTIBLE."
—EMMA STRAUB
"I LOVED this book. . . . Funny, breathtaking, hopeful."—Ali Hazelwood, author of The Love Hypothesis
GOOD MORNING AMERICA BOOK CLUB
THE DEAD ROMANTICS
a novel
Ashley Poston

8. What is the best piece of life advice you have been given?
Oh! This one's easy—a professor once told me that the saying "Find a job that you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life" is wildly inaccurate. You can love your job, but sometimes you will not like it. Sometimes, your job will not go the way you want it to. And sometimes, it downright sucks.

I love my job, I love my career, but it's still work. It's supposed to be. The job of being an author is different from the artistic act of writing. And both, I think, are work. Good work, fulfilling work, but still work.

9. What is next for you as an author?
I have three projects coming down the pipeline! One is my yearly summer romance that will more than likely come out in June 2026, and the other two are ones I don't think I can talk about yet. But they're really fun! I can't wait to announce them.

10. How can readers learn more about you and your books?
Readers call follow me on IG at @heyashposton, and also follow my Substack at ashleyposton.substack.com, and also visit my website—ashposton.com—for my author bio, a list of my books, and things to come!

***Booklist* Backlist**

Japanese and Korean Healing Fiction

by Terry Hong

Readers know that books are the cure for much of what ails us, providing escape from headlines and headaches. These comforting and diverting tales are part of a burgeoning international genre known as J- and K-healing, books from Japan and Korea, respectively, that are enjoying impressive success. Here's an assortment of recent soul-nurturing best-sellers with wide appeal.

The Curious Kitten at the Chibineko Kitchen. By Yuta Takahashi. Tr. by Cat Anderson. 2025. Penguin.

A certain seaside restaurant outside Tokyo can only be found by word-of-mouth. Visitors are welcomed by a friendly feline—Chibineko, meaning "little cat"—and a chalkboard announcing, "The Chibineko Kitchen / We serve remembrance meals." Their kagezen—gustatory offerings added to late loved ones' altars—provide a magical portal for brief reunions with the beloved dead: "You can hear your loved one's voice again" and receive the exact answers necessary to move forward. Takahashi, invitingly translated by Anderson, transforms tragedies into healing journeys of communal kindness in this delicious start to an eight-part series.

The Healing Season of Pottery. By Yeon Somin. Tr. by Clare Richards. 2024. Algonquin.

After imploding her TV-writing career, Jungmin became a shut-in. Nine months later, she finally ventures out and walks into a pottery workshop, mistaking it for a café. There, two women welcome her to join their coffee break. The studio becomes Jungmin's restorative haven, where she builds new relationships, repairs old wounds, dares new hopes, and considers other futures, all while nurturing new artistic, personal, and professional skills. Richards warmly translates Yeon's exquisite, winsome Korean import.

Marigold Mind Laundry. By Jungeun Yun. Tr. by Shanna Tan. 2024. Dial.

Timeless Jieun is mired in "aching loneliness . . . immune to life's joy." After living a million lives, she still hangs on to the slim hope of miraculous reunion with her beloved family. This time, she's settled in the coastal village of Marigold, creating a welcoming haven where she serves her special tea before visitors head upstairs to "a space where stains of the heart would be removed and wrinkled feelings ironed." A stalled filmmaker, a betrayed lover, a disgraced "celeb influencer," a musically inclined photographer, and a struggling single mother all walk through Jieun's doors for revelatory cleansing.

The Passengers on the Hankyu Line. By Hiro Arikawa. Tr. by Allison Markin Powell. 2025. Berkley.

Arikawa offers quotidian glimpses of 11 train passengers in Japan's Kansai region as they travel in one direction, then return six months later, revealing transformations in between. As they move between stations, random encounters inspire and bind these regular patrons: kindness wins, kindness rewards. Thoughtfully translated by Powell, Arikawa's work persuasively looks deep inside disparate souls, sharing illuminating realizations, supporting heartfelt decisions, and encouraging reinventions for everyday people living everyday lives.

The Second Chance Convenience Store. By Kim Hoyeon. Tr. by Janet Hong. 2025. HarperPerennial.

A lucky phone call leads to the return of Mrs. Yeom's stolen wallet, sparking a startling relationship with Dokgo, an unhoused stranger whose alcohol-induced dementia hides a gentle heart. Mrs. Yeom, a retired history teacher, runs a neighborhood convenience store that provides much-needed jobs. She surprisingly adds Dokgo to her roster. Loud complaints morph into empathic appreciation. With warmth and stability, Dokgo confronts his troubled past, effortlessly translated by Hong.

We'll Prescribe You a Cat; **We'll Prescribe You Another Cat.** By Syou Ishida. Tr. by E. Madison Shimoda. 2024-2025. Berkley.

At a certain Kyoto intersection is a narrow alley opening that leads (sometimes) to the heavy fifth-floor door of the Nakagyō Kokoro Clinic for the Soul. The staff—acerbic nurse Chitose and affable Dr. Nikké—might initially seem strange, but their feline therapies always work. In between patients, Ishida shares Chitose and Nikké's grab-the-tissues origin stories, eliciting persuasive reminders to adopt, don't shop. In these two novels, charmingly translated by Shimoda, Ishida poignantly proves that cats are, indeed, the perfect antidotes to contemporary challenges. The third in the series is due out in 2026.

Art from *The Second Chance Convenience Store.*

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PBS BOOKS

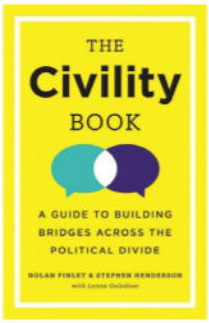
Stories That Unite Us: November on PBS Books

Celebrate civility, culture, and America's founding stories this November with PBS Books.

***The Civility Book* Virtual Town Hall**
Early November | LIVE on PBS Books

This November, join PBS Books for a timely and thought-provoking conversation with veteran journalists and authors Nolan Finley and Stephen Henderson. Once fierce editorial rivals—Finley, a staunch conservative, and Henderson, a committed progressive—they have since forged an unexpected partnership. Their story reveals the transformative power of dialogue across divides.

During this LIVE virtual town hall, audiences can submit questions in real time and engage directly with the authors as they discuss their groundbreaking new release, *The Civility Book*. The book offers a practical guide to fostering respectful relationships across political, cultural, and racial divides, with four core pillars of civility, actionable tools, discussion prompts, and resources designed to help Americans navigate the polarization of our times—one conversation at a time.



"A guide to elevating political discourse in America . . . Empowering." – Kirkus

Don't miss this engaging opportunity to connect with your fellow PBS Books community members and explore how civility can transform relationships, communities, and the nation.

PBS BOOKS READERS CLUB

Join the PBS Books Readers Club for a revolutionary-inspired conversation with best-selling coauthors Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie, known for their richly researched historical novels. In *America's First Daughter*, Dray and Kamoie bring to life Martha "Patsy" Jefferson Randolph, Thomas Jefferson's eldest daughter, who bore witness to the birth of a nation while safeguarding her father's legacy.

Their newest work, *My Dear Hamilton*, tells the extraordinary story of Eliza Schuyler Hamilton, a pioneering Revolutionary woman who stood at the center of America's founding. This discussion will explore how these remarkable women shaped history, family, and freedom—offering insight into both the challenges and triumphs of women in early America.

Celebrate America 250 with PBS Books and discover the stories of women who helped shape the nation's past—and its future. Watch live on PBS Books Facebook, or stream via the YouTube channel, PBS app, or pbs.org.

American Stories: A Reading Road Trip – Louisiana
Nov 5 | 8:00 P.M. ET

Pack your bags for a literary journey through Louisiana on **American Stories: A Reading Road Trip**, a new PBS Books series in partnership with the Library of Congress Centers for the Book. From the soulful rhythms of New Orleans jazz to the whispering poetry of the bayous, this episode celebrates the voices, landscapes, and traditions that have inspired timeless tales.

This cross-country series uncovers the distinctive literary heritage of each U.S. state and territory, shining a spotlight on authors, stories, and landmarks that have shaped our shared identity. As part of the America's 250th birthday celebration, viewers will experience the heart, history, and imagination of the United States through the power of storytelling.

Catch the Louisiana episode live on PBS Books Facebook, or stream it anytime on the PBS Books YouTube channel, PBS app, or pbs.org.

Program Highlights

The American Revolution

Ken Burns' landmark documentary series premieres November 16, 2025, on PBS

Experience the Birth of a Nation

This November, PBS invites viewers to witness history come alive with THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, a six-part, 12-hour documentary series from acclaimed filmmakers Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt, written by Geoffrey C. Ward. Airing nightly from Sunday, November 16 through Friday, November 21, 8:00–10:00 p.m. ET, the series explores the extraordinary story of America's fight for independence and the creation of a new nation.

David Schmidt, Sarah Botstein & Ken Burns

Filmed over eight years across nearly 100 locations, the series follows men and women from all walks of life—Continental soldiers, militiamen, Loyalists, Native Americans, enslaved and free African Americans, and international allies—bringing the Revolution's human drama to vivid life. From the battlefield to daily life, viewers will experience the hopes, fears, and sacrifices that shaped a nation.

A Story Told Like Never Before

Narrated by Peter Coyote, the series features nearly 200 first-person voices brought to life by an all-star cast including Meryl Streep, Josh Brolin, Ethan Hawke, Amanda Gorman, Claire Danes, Lucas Hedges, Michael Keaton, and many more. Stunning cinematography captures the beauty and diversity of North America, while reenactments, historic maps, and archival materials immerse viewers in the sights and sounds of the eighteenth century.

"We went from being subjects to inventing a new concept: citizens," says Ken Burns. "I hope people will come together to appreciate what our ancestors did to secure liberty and freedom."

Don't Miss the Premiere

Join millions of viewers to experience this epic story of courage, possibility, and the birth of a nation.

Premiere: Sunday, November 16 – Friday, November 21, 8:00–10:00 p.m. ET on PBS

Stream: PBS.org, PBS App, PBS Passport, PBS Documentaries Prime Video Channel

For local listings, visit:
pbs.org/americanrevolution.

Listen Up

Audiobooks for Multitasking

by Debbie Macomber

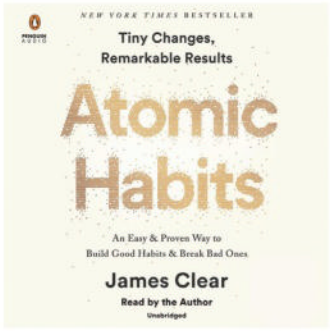
Audiobooks have changed my reading habits in a big way. Because of audiobooks, I have access to more books in an enjoyable and entertaining format. Listening to books allows me the pleasure of multitasking. I can devour a wide variety of novels while knitting, cooking, gardening, or driving. The landscape of what is popular to readers is ever-changing, and it's nearly impossible to keep current. I read as much as I can, but there are time limitations. Another reason I love audiobooks is that I find I enjoy the books more. As a writer, I began my career dissecting books. I trained myself to read and pull elements out of novels. When I listen, I enjoy the performance.

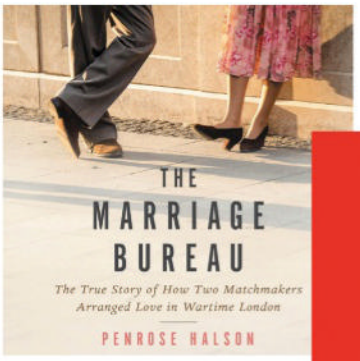
Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results. By James Clear. Read by the author. 2018. Penguin Random House Audio.

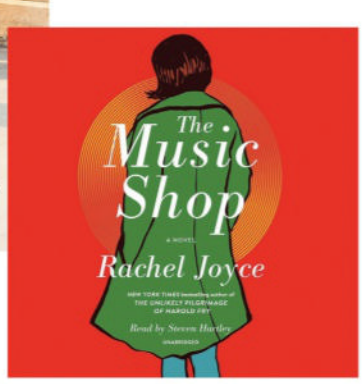
This is an audiobook that can help transform your life. The focus is on how to create habits to improve yourself. It has taught me to focus on small improvements. I strive to get exercise in and have begun rewarding myself based on my physical-exercise goals on a daily basis. A must-listen!

Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine. By Gail Honeyman. Read by Cathleen McCarron. 2017. Books on Tape.

Eleanor is a quirky loner who loves her routine and has lived under her mother's control for much of her life. As I listened to this book, I began to connect more and more with Eleanor as I got further into the story. Eleanor finds an unlikely friend in a coworker, which allows her a glimpse into a family and a life she has never known.


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results
Atomic Habits
An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones
James Clear
Read by the Author
Unabridged





The Marriage Bureau: The True Story of How Two Matchmakers Arranged Love in Wartime London. By Penrose Halson. Read by Jane Copland. 2017. HarperAudio.

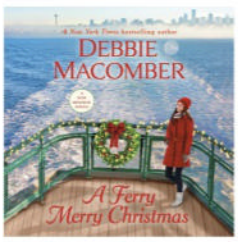
This is the story of two Englishwomen who set out to aid English soldiers abroad by helping them find English wives in the WWII era. In essence, it tells the story of a match-making service in wartime London. It is entertaining and an easy listen. It transports the reader into the lives of so many people in a heartwarming and fascinating way.

The Music Shop. By Rachel Joyce. Read by Steven Hartley. 2018. Books on Tape.

Frank owns a dying record store and resists changing with the times by only selling vinyl. Past trauma leaves him struggling with relationships until the lady in the green dress saves him. This one is full of complex and fun characters and tense interactions. You will enjoy how this book takes you on a journey through music with the characters.

Where the Crawdads Sing. By Delia Owens. Read by Cassandra Campbell. 2018. Books on Tape.

I really enjoyed this Reese Witherspoon Book Club selection about a young girl who is abandoned, left to fend for herself, and lives in the marsh. By the end of the book, you feel like you live with Kya, and you are so emotionally invested, it is hard to turn the last page. This audio is well done: emotional and moving.



Debbie Macomber is a best-selling author and avid audiobook listener. Her newest release, *A Ferry Merry Christmas*, is available on audio from Books on Tape.

Reserve These Reads

Audio

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this fall.

Fiction

After That, the Dark. By Andrew Klavan. Read by Adam Barr. HighBridge. Oct.
Another tense, clever entry in the Cameron Winter series.

Audrey Lane Stirs the Pot. By Alexis Hall. Read by Samara MacLaren. Sourcebooks Audio. Dec.
Audrey leaves her journalism career and longtime girlfriend to join Britain's biggest baking show.

Evil Bones. By Kathy Reichs. Read by Linda Emond. Simon & Schuster Audio. Nov.
Series narrator Emond is back with another Temperance Brennan outing.

Exit Strategy. By Lee Child and Andrew Child. Read by Scott Brick. Books on Tape. Nov.
Brick's tense narration is always an ideal match for a Jack Reacher thriller.

The Intruder. By Freida McFadden. Read by a full cast. Dreamscape. Oct.
Fan-favorite McFadden's twisty thriller gets a full-cast narration.

Queen Esther. By John Irving. Read by Ari Fliakos. Simon & Schuster Audio. Nov.
Irving returns to the world of *The Cider House Rules*; Fliakos' sensitive narration style will be a fine fit.

The Seven Rings. By Nora Roberts. Read by Brittany Pressley. Macmillan Audio. Nov.
The 2022 *Booklist* Voice of Choice narrator returns to narrate the third in the Lost Bride series.

The Storm. By Rachel Hawkins. Read by a full cast. Macmillan Audio. Jan.
A full-cast narration is an ideal fit for the style of tense psychological thriller Hawkins creates.

Workhorse. By Caroline Palmer. Read by Helen Laser. Macmillan Audio. Oct.
The much-anticipated debut by Palmer is one of our Top 10 First Novels on Audio.

Nonfiction

Empire of Orgasm: Sex, Power, and the Downfall of a Wellness Cult. By Ellen Huet. Spotify. Nov.
A journalist's take on a late-aughts sex and wellness cult? Sounds like a perfect pick for podcast fans!

Future Boy. By Michael J. Fox. Read by the author. Macmillan Audio. Oct.
Beloved actor and activist Fox narrates the memoir of his 1980s stardom in *Back to the Future* and *Family Ties.*

Simply More. By Cynthia Erivo. Read by the author. Macmillan Audio. Nov.
Life lessons from the Broadway legend, conveyed in her own memorable and resonant voice.

We Did OK, Kid. By Anthony Hopkins. Read by the author. Simon & Schuster Audio. Nov.
The great actor reflects on life and art; sure to be a moving experience.

Youth

Better in Black. By Cassandra Clare. Listening Library. Gr. 7–10. Dec.
Be prepared to swoon as Clare tells the story of ten favorite couples from the Shadowhunter universe.

Junie B. Jones Audio Collection: Books 1-8. By Barbara Park. Listening Library. Gr. K–3. Nov.
Junie has been beloved by kids for years! Her adventures will be a delight on audio.

Reawakening. By Orson Scott Card. Read by Stefan Rudnicki. Blackstone Publishing. Gr. 6–10. Nov.
Rudnicki returns to narrate book two in the Side Step Trilogy by best-selling author Card.

We Fell Apart. By E. Lockhart. Read by Alex Finke. Listening Library. Gr. 7–10. Nov.
Return to the world of *We Were Liars* with another Martha's Vineyard tale soaked in secrets and mystery.

Listen-alikes

Angeline Boulley's *Sisters in the Wind*

By Heather Booth

Sisters in the Wind is Angeline Boulley's third powerful YA novel that combines suspense, contemporary issues, strong young Indigenous women, and powerful narration into a blend that keeps listeners on the edge of their seats and makes for a thoroughly discussable YA crossover for book clubs. These YA and adult listen-alikes will have similar appeal for audiobook listeners.

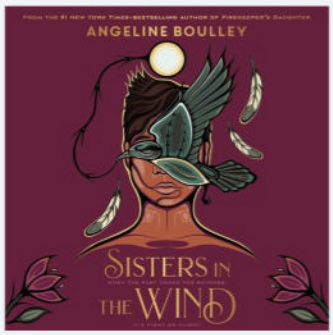
Firekeeper's Daughter. By Angeline Boulley. Read by Isabella Star LaBlanc. 2021. Macmillan Audio. Gr. 10–12.

Start with Boulley and LaBlanc's first pairing, which was widely praised and introduces Daunis, a significant character in *Sisters*. In Michigan, Daunis is caught between two worlds: her father's Ojibwe tribe and her mother's wealthy, French ancestors. When she witnesses a drug-influenced murder by a tribal member, Daunis is approached by the FBI to help find the drug dealers and manufacturers in the community. It's a tale filled with suspense, and LaBlanc's sensitive reading and nuanced use of Ojibwe language will keep listeners plugged in.

The Babysitter Lives. By Stephen Graham Jones. Read by Isabella Star LaBlanc and the author. 2022. Simon & Schuster Audio.

For teens who love LaBlanc's narration and are ready for an even more spine-chilling tale, look no further than her narration of this reigning horror king's Indigenous take on the classic babysitter/haunted house horror. LaBlanc, a Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota actor, is the ideal choice to represent Indigenous teen Charlotte; her voice is both youthful and commanding, allowing listeners to relax and put their trust in her as a babysitter.

Sisters in the Wind. By Angeline Boulley. Read by Isabella Star LaBlanc. 2025. Macmillan Audio. Gr. 9–12.



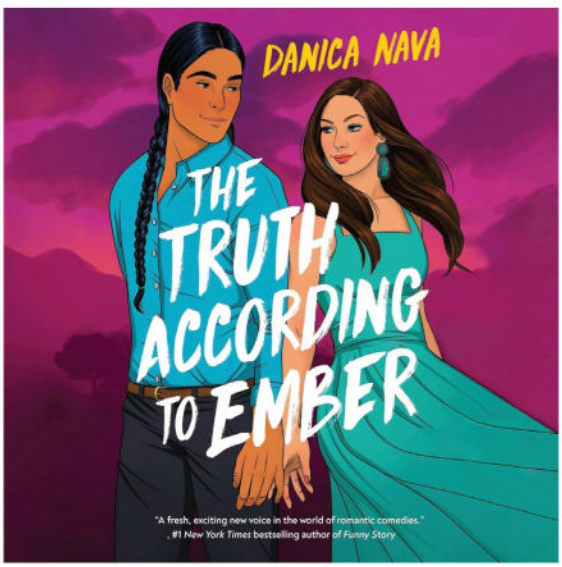
Lucy has a history with fire. From the celebratory birthday fireworks her otherwise straight-laced single dad sets off for her each year, to a grief-empowered act of reclamation and defiance when her predictable world crumbles, to fires that imperil her safety, freedom, and the people she loves, fire marks her young life. Boulley's third story set among the characters first introduced in *Firekeeper's Daughter* (2021) brings Daunis and Jesse back as Lucy's mentors and protectors, after injuries from an explosion at the diner where Lucy works as a recently aged-out foster teen put her on a long recovery path. From and with them, Lucy begins to learn about her Ojibwe family and the lengths her father went to hide her Indigenous heritage. Interspersed with the present-day drama, flashbacks tell Lucy's story of loss, foster homes, and abuse of power. LaBlanc returns to narrate, an excellent partner for Boulley's writing. She varies her voice for major characters and gives elders a distinct cadence. Listeners can hear Lucy evolve, her once-innocent and eager tones becoming flatter and more detached with each degradation of security in her life. Scenes of suspense and emotion are voiced with a simmering tension, making Lucy's story of survival and reinvention powerful on audio. —*Heather Booth*

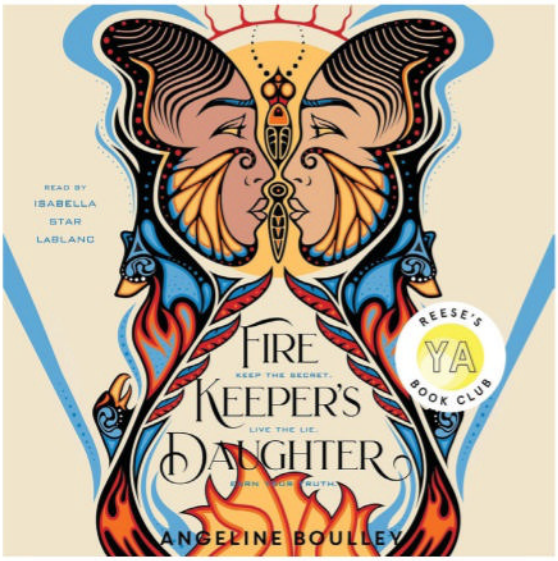
Harvest House. By Cynthia Leitich Smith. Read by Shaun Taylor-Corbett and Charley Flyte. 2023. Listening Library. Gr. 9–12.

A group of plucky Indigenous and Latinx teens work together to set up a haunted house, wrestle with the supernatural, and solve a decades-old mystery that links back to the disappearance of an Indigenous girl in 1985. Smith's likable characters are admirably brought to life by the readers. Don't miss the twist ending!

Patron Saints of Nothing. By Randy Ribay. Read by Ramón de Ocampo. 2019. Listening Library. Gr. 10–12.

Like Lucy in *Sisters in* the Wind, Jay finds himself straddling two cultures. Until his cousin Jun was murdered, Jay thought little of his Filipino heritage. The family isn't really talking about what happened to gentle Jun, but with spring break approaching, Jay convinces his parents to


DANICA NAVA
THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO EMBER
"A fresh, exciting new voice in the world of romantic comedies."
—#1 New York Times bestselling author of Funny Story



send him to the Philippines to dig into this mystery. De Ocampo, like author Ribay, is Filipino American, and is an optimal cipher, effortlessly navigating among vernacular English, Tagalog-infused accents, and native Tagalog conversations.

The Truth According to Ember. By Danica Nava. Read by Siena East. 2024. Books on Tape.

If you loved listening to the story of a smart Indigenous young woman but want something on the lighter side, Nava's debut, an adult-market romance, could be just the ticket. Ember Cardinal fudges a few lines on her resume and checks "white" on the application to get a job, but quickly finds herself in over her head as an executive assistant to a real jerk—and head over heels for Danuwoa Colson, the IT guy. East, a Choctaw stand-up comic and actor, gives Ember a quirky energy befitting her geeky, earnest nature.

Reserve These Reads

Children & Teens

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this month.

Older

Coldwire. By Chloe Gong. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry. Gr. 9–12.

In best-selling Gong's new dystopian series starter, humanity takes refuge from the deteriorating real world in a virtual reality, where two soldiers get caught up in a cold war between two powerful nations.

The House Saphir. By Marissa Meyer. Feiwel and Friends. Gr. 9–12.

This forthcoming stand-alone from the commercially successful "queen of fairy-tale retellings" is a romantasy murder-mystery based on the legend of Bluebeard.

MindWorks: An Uncanny Compendium of Short Fiction. By Neal Shusterman. Simon & Schuster. Gr. 7–12.

This absolute behemoth of a fantastical short-story collection by Shusterman includes a return trip to his best-selling Arc of a Scythe universe as well as some new material.

We Fell Apart. By E. Lockhart. Delacorte. Gr. 9–12.

Lockhart's return to Martha's Vineyard is steeped with mystery, intrigue, and familial tension, and her new fans, following the recently released TV adaptation of *We Were Liars*, will revel in this new chapter.

Middle

Chris Makes a Friend. By Alex Gino. Scholastic. Gr. 3–7.

Gino continues to explore the nuances of gender identity and big feelings in their latest, focused on a young girl's summer with her grandparents, little sister, and a new friend.

Dog Man: Big Jim Believes. By Dav Pilkey. Art by the author. Scholastic/Graphix. Gr. 2–5.

Dog Man and his many friends find that the Space Cuties from Space have returned to wreak havoc in the fourteenth entry of the amusing super series.

Firefox Moon. By Eoin Colfer. Roaring Brook. Gr. 3–7.

This sequel to the best-selling MG fantasy *Juniper's Christmas* sees Juniper embark on a midsummer adventure as she fights to protect the magical Cedar Wood in the middle of London.

Xolo. By Donna Barba Higuera. Illus. by Mariana Ruiz Johnson. Levine Querido. Gr. 2–5.

The Aztec origin-of-man myth is freshly interpreted by award-winning Higuera, who explores this lesser-known tale of Quetzalcoatl's dog-headed twin brother, Xolotl.

Young

André: André Leon Talley—A Fabulously Fashionable Fairy Tale. By Carole Boston Weatherford and Rob Sanders. Illus. by Lamont O'Neal. Holt. K–Gr. 3.

Fashion king Talley is brought to tender, glorious life by the award-winning team of Weatherford and Sanders, who take readers into the late *Vogue* editor's young life and journey to fame.

Goodnight, Crayons. By Drew Daywalt. Illus. by Oliver Jeffers. Philomel. PreS–Gr. 3.

The iconic crayons have quit, come home, celebrated holidays, appealed to the youngest readers and now, it's bedtime! Join them on their expectedly complex nighttime routine that every kid and parent will relate to.

The Christmas Sweater. By Jan Brett. Illus. by the author. Putnam. PreS–Gr. 3.

Best-seller Brett shares the journey of Theo and his rescue pug, Ari, as they use their Christmas gifts from Yiayia to go on a snowy journey—with a little Greek-myth inspiration weaved in.

The Humble Pie. By Jory John. Illus. by Pete Oswald. Harper. PreS–Gr. 3.

The food-group gang has a new pal on the scene—Humble Pie! Along with bestie Jake the cake, they learn the importance of being humble with all the quirky joy of John and Oswald's other amusing collaborations.

A Knot Is Not a Tangle. By Daniel Nayeri. Illus. by Vesper Stamper. Knopf. PreS–Gr. 3.

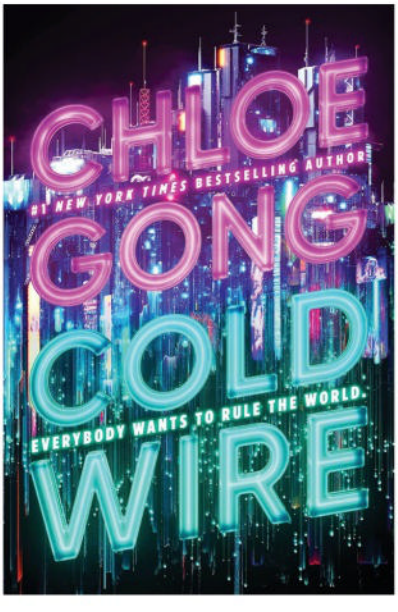
As a boy learns from his grandmother how to weave a Persian rug, he learns valuable life lessons and makes precious family memories, in this book that draws from Printz and Newbery winner Nayeri's childhood experiences.

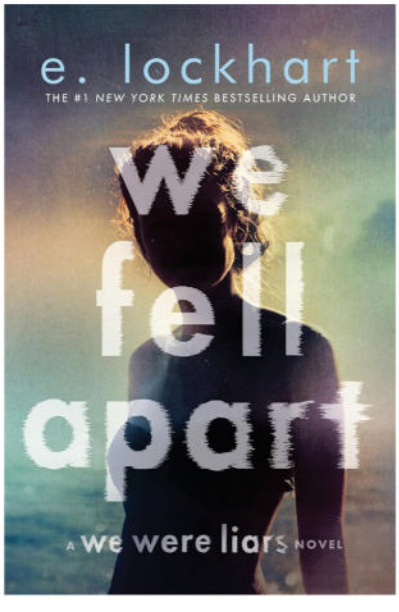
The Old Sleigh. By Jarrett Pumphrey and Jerome Pumphrey. Illus. by the authors. Norton. PreS–Gr. 3.

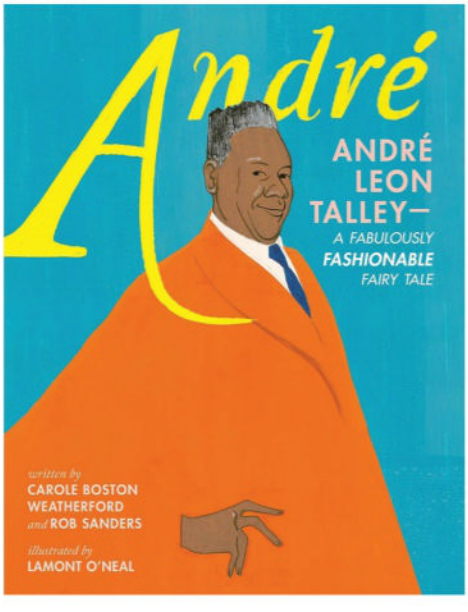
The team behind *The Old Truck* and *The Old Boat* returns with a holiday companion story of a persevering sleigh serving a growing town and the new tradition it inspires when things go wrong.

Vida: The Mice, the Cat, and the Alebrije. By Duncan Tonatiuh. Illus. by the author. Abrams. PreS–Gr. 3.

Mexican culture is the inspiration for this original folktale from the Sibert- and Belpré-winning author-illustrator, about two courageous mouse siblings who attempt to run off the cat terrorizing their town.







Art from *Mindworks; Xolo;* and *The Humble Pie.*

Art from *Autumn Peltier, Water Warrior.*

Essentials

Elementary-School Biographies of Native Women

by Christine Hartman Derr

Native women have been leaders throughout history. From ballerinas to congresswomen and from tribal leaders to scientists, these strong role models have broken barriers and paved the way for future generations. The following picture books and early-reader chapter books offer a glimpse into the strength, courage, tenacity, and fierce compassion embodied by this broad range of people.

Autumn Peltier, Water Warrior. By Carole Lindstrom. Illus. by Bridget George. 2023. Roaring Brook. Gr. 1–3.

Lindstrom's profile of Indigenous activist Autumn Peltier describes how Autumn's grandmother and later Autumn herself advocate for caring for the water. Breathtaking illustrations accompany the lyrical text, offering steps young readers can take to care for their local aquatic habitats and watersheds. While chronicling Peltier's activism, Lindstrom makes the genuine care behind her work the heartbeat of this story. Expansive back matter invites further learning and includes a list of additional resources.

Buffalo Bird Girl: A Hidatsa Story. By S. D. Nelson. Illus. by the author. 2012. Abrams. Gr. 2–6.

This picture-book biography weaves together the real history of Buffalo Bird Woman with Nelson's (Standing Rock Sioux) storytelling of the woman's childhood. Especially insightful is the inclusion of Buffalo Bird Woman's own words alongside archival photographs. From her early days to how each season changed her tribe's lifestyle, her life is chronicled with care alongside breathtaking art. This longer-form picture book is an excellent choice for older elementary students on the border between chapter books and middle-grade biographies.

Classified: The Secret Career of Mary Golda Ross, Cherokee Aerospace Engineer. By Traci Sorell. Illus. by Natasha Donovan. 2021. Lerner/Millbrook. Gr. 2–5.

From graduating high school at 16 to working as an aerospace engineer at NASA, Ross blazed a trail for women while living her Cherokee values out loud. She broke barriers and helped pave the path for others by recruiting young women and Native students to study math and science. Stunning illustrations capture the time and settings, while the clear, precise text makes the story approachable. An author's note, details on Cherokee values, source notes, and a bibliography complete the back matter.

Peggy Flanagan: Ogimaa Kwe, Lieutenant Governor. By Jessica Engelking. Illus. by Tashia Hart. 2025. Lerner. Gr. 2–4.

Peggy Flanagan is the first Native Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota. Engelking (White Earth Band of Ojibwe) and Hart (Red Lake Anishinaabe) tell Flanagan's life journey thus far in this chapter book via accessible text, grayscale illustrations, and photographs. Engelking covers Flanagan's childhood experiences of being misunderstood, the importance of seeing herself reflected in a professor, and the 2024 gubernatorial election. Back matter includes

a section on historical context, a time line, glossary, source notes, and discussion questions.

Sharice's Big Voice: A Native Kid Becomes a Congresswoman. By Sharice Davids and Nancy K. Mays. Illus. by Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley. 2021. Harper. K–Gr. 3.

In this picture-book autobiography by one of the first Native women elected to Congress, Davids (Ho-Chunk Nation) details how her childhood and young adult experiences, from leaning into her love of conversation to mixed-martial arts competitions to the more traditional law and politics career choices, equipped her to run for Congress. Cultural influences, including working hard toward a goal, are established as a constant through all her endeavors. Ample back matter concludes this must-have biography.

She Persisted: Deb Haaland. By Laurel Goodluck. Illus. by Gillian Flint. 2023. Philomel. Gr. 2–4.

This engaging and timely chapter book biography in the She Persisted series chronicles the life and journey of one of the first two Native women elected to Congress and the first Native person to head the U.S. Department of the Interior. Larger print and interspersed grayscale illustrations increase accessibility for young readers, while Goodluck's narrative style invites readers into the life of this strong public servant.

She Persisted: Maria Tallchief. By Christine Day. Illus. by Gillian Flint. 2021. Philomel. Gr. 2-4.

This installment in the She Persisted series focuses on prima ballerina Maria Tallchief (Osage Nation). Day not only conveys Tallchief's love of dance but places her within the context of her time, from the Osage finding oil on their lands in the 1920s to the cultural events Tallchief attended—events forbidden by the U.S. government until 1978. Interspersed illustrations add to the readability. Beautiful, accessible, and memorable, this biography has a strong narrative to hook young readers beyond researching school projects. Chapter titles in Osage are especially meaningful. Back matter includes a touching author's note.

She Persisted: Wilma Mankiller. By Traci Sorell. Illus. by Gillian Flint. 2022. Philomel. Gr. 2–4.

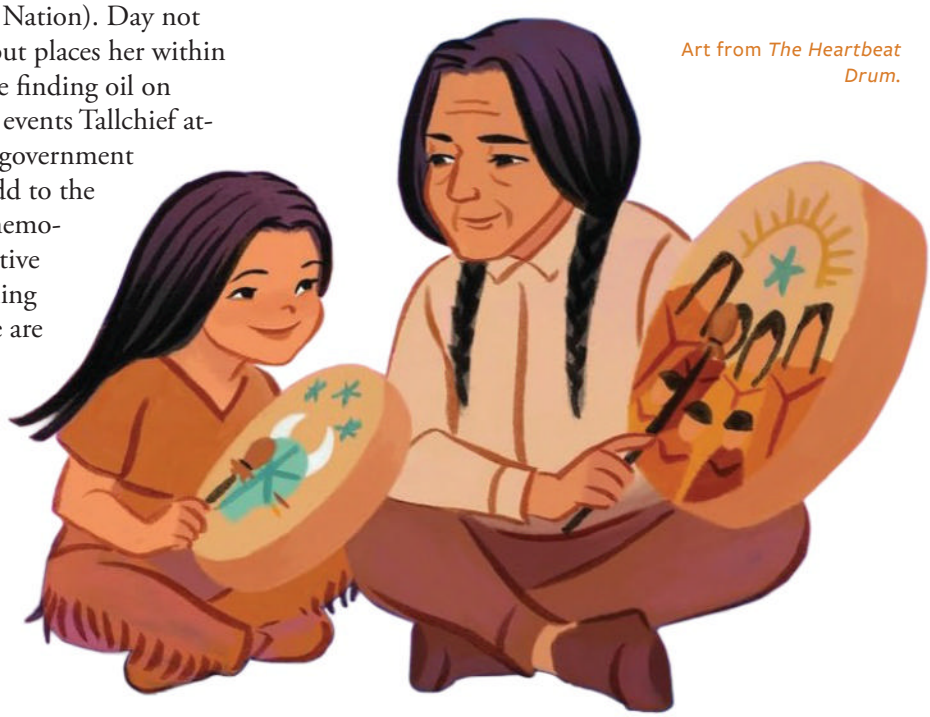
Another notable She Persisted title is Sorell's biography of Cherokee chief Wilma Mankiller. This chapter book spans Mankiller's life, from her childhood on the reservation to moving during the Indian Relocation era to her days of activism on Alcatraz. Mankiller's experiences culminated in her role as the first woman chief of the Cherokee Nation. Chapter titles include Cherokee syllabary, while sporadic illustrations underscore emotionally resonant moments. Back matter includes references and a note on terms.

The Heartbeat Drum: The Story of Carol Powder, Cree Drummer and Activist. By Deidre Havrelock. Illus. by Aphelandra. 2024. Abrams. K–Gr. 3.

This picture book profiles Cree drummer and activist Carol Powder who, from a young age, felt called to the drum. Moshum, her grandfather, taught her to drum and warned her that some community members may resist women drumming. Cree language is woven into lyrics throughout the text, and the hopeful culmination of the story, featuring Powder teaching the tradition to her children and grandchildren, is particularly evocative. Vibrant art accompanies the text and captures emotional resonance. Informative back matter concludes.

Toypurina: Japchivit Leader, Medicine Woman, Tongva Rebel. By Cheyenne M. Stone and Glenda Armand. Illus. by Katie Dorame. 2024. little bee. Gr. 1–3.

This picture book details the life of Tongva leader Toypurina. From childhood scenes depicting the values with which she was raised to the uprising she led against the Spanish missionaries for mistreating Indigenous peoples, Toypurina's full life is vividly encapsulated here. Substantial back matter adds to the informative narrative, while beautiful illustrations showcase the setting.



Art from *The Heartbeat Drum.*

Essentials

Foodie Rival Romance

by Kelly Ferreria

Romance often feels like a deliciously sweet treat to the genre's fervent fan base, especially if there's a little spicy rivalry or conflict that brings love interests together. In the following delectable tales, readers can expect foodies of all types, terse competitions or rivalries gone wrong, and of course, a generous helping of (sometimes forbidden) romantic escapades.

Batter Royale. By Leisl Adams. Art by the author. 2022. Abrams/Amulet. Gr. 8–11.

High-school seniors Rose and Fred compete on the popular cooking show *Batter Royale* with the hopes of spending the $500,000 prize on culinary school and saving Fred's mom's restaurant, but the two aren't quite prepared for the hijinks, sabotage, booby traps, and romance in store.

Bingsu for Two. By Sujin Witherspoon. 2025. Union Square. Gr. 9–12.

River is going through it—he broke up with his long-time girlfriend, ran out of the SATs, and rage-quit his job at Cafe Gong, his family's coffee enterprise. Impulsively, River takes a new job at a Korean café and finds himself in a fauxmance with Sarang, his extra-grumpy new coworker.

Donut Summer. By Anita Kelly. 2025. HarperCollins/Quill Tree. Gr. 8–12.

Penny would rather do anything else than work with her nemesis Mateo, but her desire to work at her favorite donut shop outweighs the hatred. When they find out that Delicious Donuts' owner is thinking of selling, the frost cracks and the romance slowly heats up.

Eliza, from Scratch. By Sophia Lee. 2025. HarperCollins/Quill Tree. Gr. 9–12.

Salutatorian status should be in the bag for senior Eliza Park, but she accidentally ends up in culinary-arts class with a distinct lack of culinary skills. Worse, she's paired with deeply annoying and culinarily gifted Welsey for a group project, but the pair bonds over their Asian American heritage and drive to win.

Guava and Grudges. By Alexis Castellanos. 2024. Bloomsbury YA. Gr. 10–12.

Ana Maria dreams of being a Michelin-starred pastry chef, but her commitment to her family's Cuban bakery and hatred for their generational enemy, the Morales Bakery, stand in the way. Enter Miguel—his knack for film and photography might be her ticket to a scholarship, so long as no one figures out he's a Morales.

If You Can't Take the Heat. By Michael Ruhlman. 2024. Penguin Workshop. Gr. 9–12.

After a bad leg break and breakup, former football star Theo watched *a lot* of PBS cooking shows and developed an obsession with cooking. So when the chance to work in an upscale French restaurant appears, he jumps in head-first, learning about the darker side of restaurant ops.

Love à la Mode. By Stephanie Kate Strohm. 2018. Hyperion. Gr. 9–12.

Fledgling chefs Henry and Rosie have a transatlantic meet-cute on the flight to a culinary program in Paris, but find that the high-stakes program and an interloping pastry

Art from the covers of *Batter Royale; Donut Summer; Eliza, from Scratch;* and *A Taste for Love.*

chef interested in Rosie start to sour the romance. Both desperately want to succeed, and they just might cook up enough of a storm to do so.

Melt with You. By Jennifer Dugan. 2022. Putnam. Gr. 9–12.

Ignoring your ex-best friend is far more difficult when trapped in the close quarters of a food truck road trip, and yet, Fallon is pretty determined to ice Chloe right out of the ice-cream truck. But the proximity and unexpected detours bring up enough old feelings to heat it all up.

North of Happy. By Adi Alsaid. 2017. HarlequinTeen. Gr. 9–12.

Carlos leaves Mexico City behind following the death of his brother Felix (whose ghost now inexplicably haunts him) and sets out for a Seattle-area restaurant, getting a job working under the business' intimidating celebrity chef. Unfortunately, fate adds a little spice as Carlos falls in love with the chef's daughter, Emma.

A Pho Love Story. By Loan Le. 2021. Simon & Schuster. Gr. 9–12.

Le's debut follows underachiever Bao Nguyen and artsy Linh Mai—the two have always avoided each other given their families' feuding Vietnamese restaurants with rivalry that smells of something deeper. Following a chance school newspaper assignment, Bao and Linh connect and come to better understand the echoing traumas of the Vietnam War that still affect their loved ones.

Salt and Sugar. By Rebecca Carvalho. 2022. Harlequin/Inkyard. Gr. 8–12.

The baking rivalry between the Ramires and the Molinas families is fierce and hostile, even more so after an aggressive supermarket chain starts forcing neighborhood businesses out. When Lari Ramires lands in a cooking club led by Pedro Molina, the two cook up a plan to unite their families against big business and save both bakeries.

A Taste for Love. By Jennifer Yen. 2021. Razorbill. Gr. 8–11.

Inspired by her parents' bakery, Liza Yang wants to go to culinary school, but her traditional Taiwanese mother would prefer she pick a "practical" career and date a nice Asian boy. To Liza's horror, she gets duped into judging her mother's annual baking contest, which is actually a host of boys her mother considers viable dating options.

Voyage de Gourmet. By Paul Tobin. Art by Jem Milton. 2023. Maverick. Gr. 6–11.

Influencer Layne Green dreams of competing on *Voyage de Gourmet*, a culinary show that's *Survivor* meets *Iron Chef*. It's just his luck when he's chosen to compete but is teamed up with Jiang-Mi Pipper, his ex-friend whom he scorned after a personal video gone wrong in this boldly colored and highly stylized graphic novel.

The Way You Make Me Feel. By Maurene Goo. 2018. Farrar. Gr. 9–12.

Following a prom prank gone wrong, rebellious Clara Shin is now trapped working all summer on her dad's hot, cramped food truck with overachiever and perennial enemy Rose Carver. With the help of her dad, though, Clara starts to see Rose less as an adversary and more as a friend, and finds some romance with neighboring food truck employee, Hamlet.

Where There's a Whisk. By Sarah J. Schmitt. 2021. Running Press Kids. Gr. 8–12.

Peyton knows that winning *Top Teen Chef* would be her ticket to culinary school and a better life following her father's prison sentence and her mother's business loss. When she lands a spot on the show, she's determined to shake her "poor contestant" ascribed persona, but two cute cooking competitors are proving more distracting than anticipated.

Read-alikes

Get Kids Cooking

By Sarah Hunter

There are many benefits to getting kids to help in the kitchen. Apart from the basic value of gaining cooking skills, they can become more open to trying new foods, more aware of where their food comes from, and—if you're lucky—more capable of pitching in to prepare meals for their families (no guarantees on them helping clean up, though). The world of cookbooks for kids is not as robust as it is for adults, but there are a handful of standout titles, such as *Sweet & Salty* (see review on p.29) that not only offer kid-friendly recipes for aspiring chefs of all abilities but introduce important techniques, terminology, and guidelines that will bolster skills and boost confidence. The following titles are specifically designed for young cooks, with inclusions ranging from picture recipes for pre-readers to easy recipes that nonetheless will need adult help to more complicated instructions for independently cooking teens.

Bake, Make, and Learn to Cook: Fun and Healthy Recipes for Young Cooks. By David Atherton. Illus. by Rachel Stubbs. 2021. Candlewick. Gr. 2–5.

Atherton, winner of the *Great British Bake Off* in 2019, offers a cookbook with straightforward, easily adaptable recipes, like brownies and banana pancakes, geared toward children. Adults will need to be nearby for kitchen newbies, but the recipes are satisfyingly achievable for kiddos.

The Big, Fun Kids Cookbook: 150+ Recipes for Young Chefs. By Food Network Magazine. 2020. Hearst. Gr. 3–7.

Compiled from *Food Network Magazine*, the recipes in this cookbook contain helpful tips, photos of the completed dishes, and easy-to-follow steps. A closing section on "fake-out cakes," with confections playfully resembling cheeseburgers, mac and cheese, and more, will be particularly fun for kids.

The Complete Cookbook for Young Chefs: 100+ Recipes That You'll Love to Cook and Eat! By America's Test Kitchen Kids. 2018. Sourcebooks/Jabberwocky. Gr. 3–7.

The always reliable America's Test Kitchen brings its expertise to this especially strong kids' cookbook. Generously illustrated with photos of recipe steps, techniques, and finished products, the book features not only a wide variety of dishes but also plentiful advice about basic skills, recommended tools, and suggested adaptations. A companion title with the same approachable format and content, *The Complete Baking Book for Young Chefs* (2019), demystifies the art of baking for kids in the same age group.

The Complete Cookbook for Teen Chefs. By America's Test Kitchen Kids. 2022. America's Test Kitchen Kids. Gr. 7–12.

Tweens and teens with more confidence and independence can turn to this "teen tested and teen approved" volume, which offers a richer variety of more complicated dishes, such as shakshuka, arepas, and chana makhani, with the same reliable background information and guidance readers can expect from an America's Test Kitchen cookbook. Some project recipes—such as hand-pulled noodles for biang biang mian—will appeal to ambitious teens.

The Juneteenth Cookbook: Recipes and Activities for Kids and Families to Celebrate. By Alliah L. Agostini and Taffy Elrod. Illus. by Sawyer Cloud. 2024. Quarto/becker&mayer! kids. Gr. 2–5.

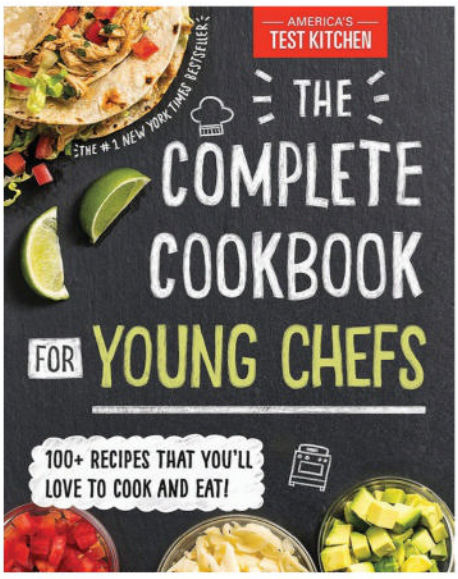
Alongside the detailed, approachable recipes for dishes associated with Juneteenth, Agostini and Elrod include historical context and instructions for crafts for celebrating the holiday. They also keep the dishes achievable for kids eager to help prepare for family festivities, such as a barbecue rub (but not the actual barbecue), red-velvet ice cream sandwiches with no-churn ice cream, and chicken sliders calling for premade rotisserie chicken.

Look and Cook Snacks: A First Book of Recipes in Pictures. By Valorie Fisher. Illus. by the author. 2023. Astra/Astra Young Readers. PreS–Gr. 2.

With the youngest cooks in mind, Fisher takes a uniquely visual approach in this book of picture recipes. Kids will likely need some assistance deciphering some of the instructions initially, but once they get the hang of it, the step-by-step photos using the same measuring tools will be easy to follow to create dishes ranging from yogurt parfaits to oven-baked pizzas on storebought naan.

Sweet & Salty! King Arthur Baking Company's Cookbook for Young Bakers. By Jessica Battilana. Illus. by Rick Holbrook and Jordan Sondler. Sept. 2025. illus. Simon & Schuster. Gr. 3–8.

From the venerable King Arthur Baking Company comes this treasure trove of recipes, techniques, and information about ingredients designed for young bakers at a variety of age, experience, and interest levels. The book's two sections—one devoted to sweets and the other to savory items—feature a lineup of recipes that are clearly rated easy or medium, with a handful designated as projects (baked goods that may take more time, skill, or adult help). Clear color photographs on almost every page showcase the tempting finished products and offer step-by-step guidance for tricky processes, like how to turn a cake out of a pan without breaking it. Eighty-plus tasty recipes are loaded with kid appeal and range from cozy classics like soft and squishy dinner rolls and the simplest chocolate cake to truly impressive creations like banana split French toast, loaded baked potato waffles, and a giant, skillet-size chocolate chip cookie. The focus throughout is on having fun, learning something new, and becoming part of a multigenerational baking community. Authoritative, fresh, and joyful, this collection will inspire children and families to spend time in the kitchen together, and is a must-have for youth cookbook collections. —*Jane Harper*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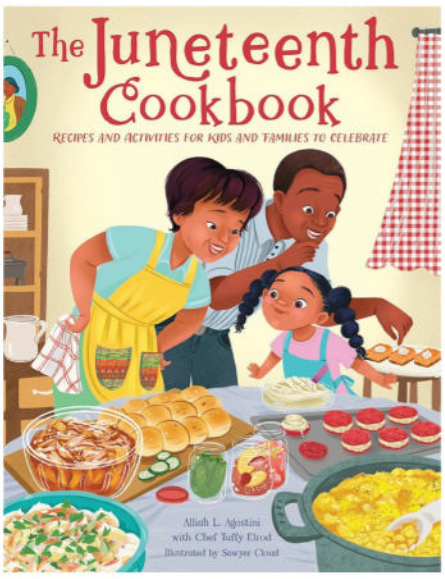
100+ RECIPES THAT YOU'LL LOVE TO COOK AND EAT!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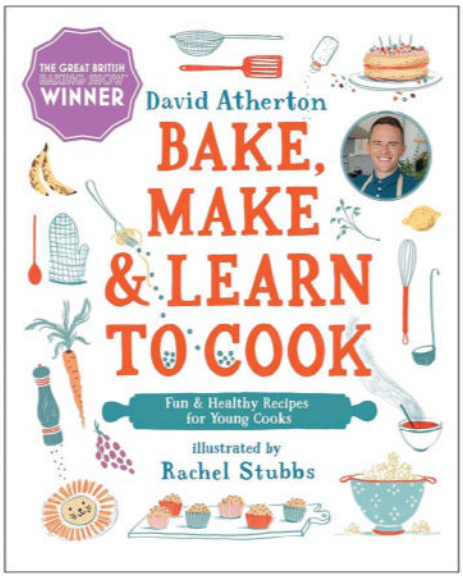
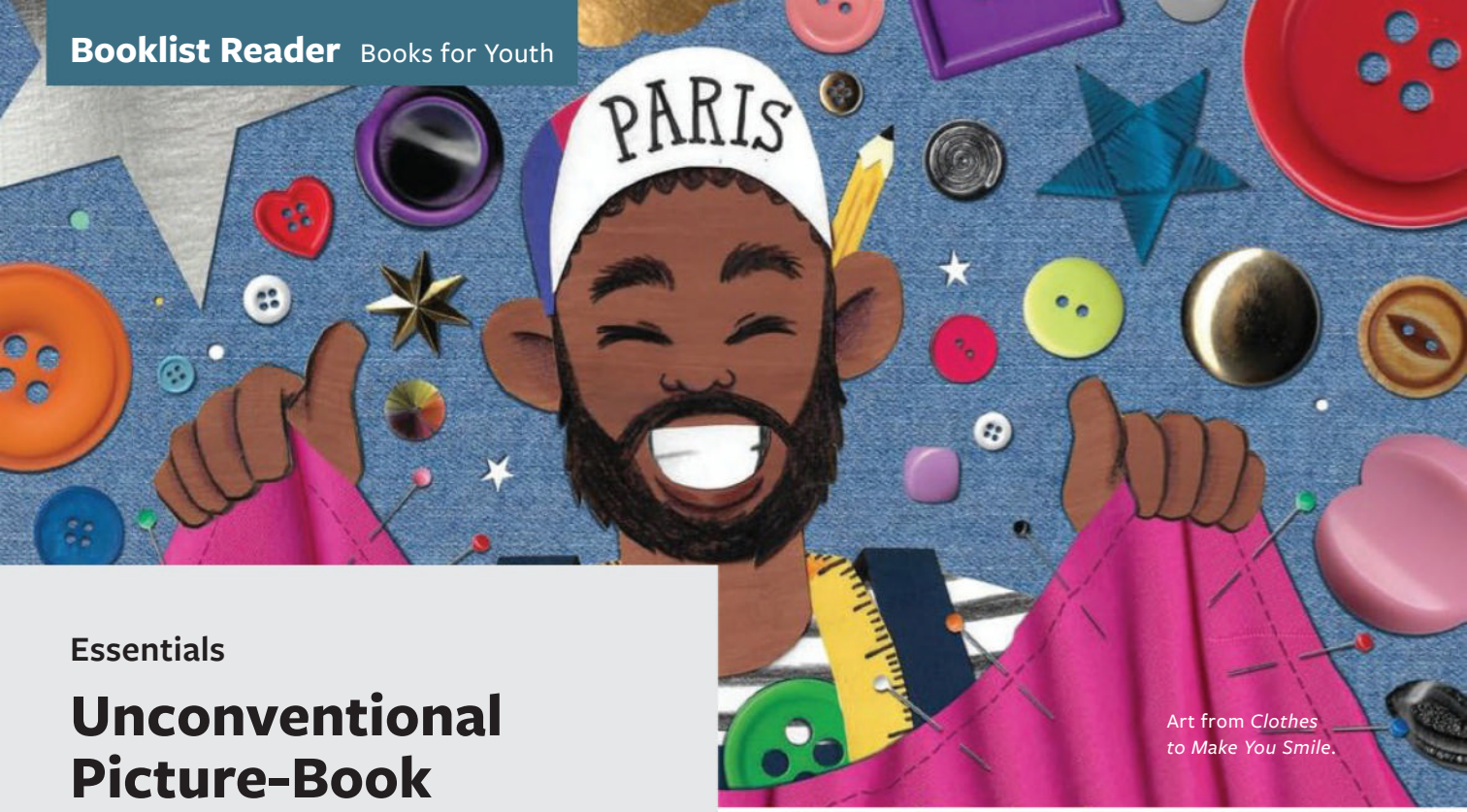
with Chef Taffy Elrod
Illustrated by Sawyer Cloud


THE GREAT BRITISH BAKING SHOW WINNER
David Atherton
BAKE, MAKE & LEARN TO COOK
Fun & Healthy Recipes for Young Cooks
illustrated by
Rachel Stubbs



Art from *Clothes to Make You Smile.*

Essentials

Unconventional Picture-Book Illustrations

by Kelly Ferreria

The world of picture books is filled with impressive artistry, but some illustrators take it even further, employing uncommon techniques and materials, such as collage, found objects, fiber arts, photographed dioramas, hand-dyed fabric, and more. That creativity is on full display in this collection of titles showcasing some of the innovative methods illustrators use to create captivating artwork.

An American Story. By Kwame Alexander. Illus. by Dare Coulter. 2023. Little, Brown. Gr. 3–6.

Coulter's clay sculptures, superimposed against painted wood backgrounds, add depth and realism to images depicting the brutally honest history of American slavery.

The Blue House. By Phoebe Wahl. Illus. by the author. 2020. Knopf. PreS–Gr. 3.

Vibrant illustrations, created with watercolor, gouache, colored pencil, and collage, feature deep colors and expressive drawings of characters struggling with the prospect of moving to a new home.

Chidori: A Story of One Thousand Birds. By Jennifer Maruno. Illus. by Miki Sato. 2025. Pajama. Gr. 1–6.

The 2011 Tohuku earthquake and tsunami in Japan is captured with raw clarity in Sato's three-dimensional paper collage illustrations of a child's experience, featuring delicate sumi-e ink brushstrokes, textiles, and embroidery silk.

Clothes to Make You Smile: Patrick Kelly Designs His Dreams. By Eric Darnell Pritchard. Illus. by Shannon Wright. 2026. Abrams. PreS–Gr. 3.

This forthcoming biography of vibrant, avant garde Kelly and his humble beginnings in Mississippi is well-supplemented with scenes depicted in collage of cardstock, paint, pencils, buttons, fabric, yarn, and magazine clippings.

Farmhouse. By Sophie Blackall. Illus. by the author. 2022. Little, Brown. K–Gr. 3.

Blackall salvaged materials from an abandoned farmhouse—including wallpaper, newspapers, paper bags, clothing, string, and more—to supplement the collages featured in this homage to the lifetime of a beloved home.

How to Read a Book. By Kwame Alexander. Illus. by Melissa Sweet. 2019. Harper. PreS–Gr. 3.

This mesmerizing ode to reading by a multi-award-winning team features intricate collage using an array of materials, including text and images from the original *Bambi* novel, old book covers, and more, as well as a gatefold and die-cut page for expanding enthusiasm.

I Am a Meadow Mermaid. By Kallie George. Illus. by Elly MacKay. 2023. Tundra. PreS–Gr. 2.

Photographed paper dioramas capture the fluid movement and depth of the grassy fields the protagonist glides through as she pretends to be a mermaid embarking on a variety of ocean-themed adventures.

The Kite Collector. By Zoey Abbott. Illus. by the author. 2025. Kids Can. PreS–Gr. 2.

James is a kite connoisseur with a penchant for perfection, but his baby sister is known to wreak havoc in her desire to be included, captured with sketches and risograph printing imposed on multimedia and cut-paper collage.

The Knight of Little Import. By Hannah Batsel. Illus. by the author. 2023. Carolrhoda. K–Gr. 3.

Charlie's knightly escapades throughout her tiny town of Little Import are captured through a mesmerizing display of mixed-media collage, using handmade and purchased paper, paints, ink, watercolors, artificial turf, and more, rich with depth and texture on every page.

The Museum of Everything. By Lynne Rae Perkins. Illus. by the author. 2021. Greenwillow. K–Gr. 2.

Perkins throws everything at the wall to convey a museum of things that fill a child with wonder, including photographed 3D models that produce the look of a dollhouse (crafted with sand, stone, wood, moss, wool, and more) and more traditionally painted spreads.

My Beautiful Birds. By Suzanne Del Rizzo. Illus. by the author. 2017. Pajama. Gr. 1–3.

A young boy worries about the pigeons he cared for as his family flees his war-torn home, with intricate, texturally sculpted clay artwork capturing the child's heavy emotions and connection to birds.

My Bed: Enchanting Ways to Fall Asleep Around the World. By Rebecca Bond. Illus. by Salley Mavor. 2020. Clarion. PreS–Gr. 2.

Mavor's wonderfully detailed, diorama-like scenes are created with textiles, beads, wood, and wire and are richly, meticulously embellished with embroidery to depict the scope of sleeping traditions around the world.

My Indigo World: A True Story of the Color Blue. By Rosa Chang. Illus. by the author. 2023. Astra/Minedition. K–Gr. 3.

The combination of watercolor paint and digitally rendered, hand-dyed indigo fabric perfectly supplements this guide to the history and variety of indigo dying practices, ranging from Japanese shibori and sashiko techniques to Korean bojagi cloths and more.

Nina: A Story of Nina Simone. By Traci N. Todd. Illus. by Christian Robinson. 2021. Putnam. Gr. 1–3.

Robinson's illustrations subtly portray Nina Simone's gradual move from more subdued dresses to her bold, colorful, and Afrocentric signature style throughout her eventful life in acrylic paint, collage, and "a bit of digital manipulation".

Nothing Special. By Desiree Cooper. Illus. by Bec Sloane. 2022. Wayne State Univ. PreS–Gr. 3.

This evocative work celebrates simple pleasures and is an homage to southbound summer journeys that many Black families make, depicted with three-dimensional characters and settings made entirely from repurposed fabrics and found objects.

There Was a Party for Langston. By Jason Reynolds. Illus. by Jerome Pumphrey and Jarrett Pumphrey. 2023. Atheneum. Gr. 1–3.

The Pumphrey brothers created hundreds of stamps by hand to compose the illustrations for this book, which celebrates a real party at New York Public Library's Schomburg Center, where Black authors partied in honor of the great Langston Hughes.

Thread by Thread. By Alice Brière-Haquet. Illus. by Michela Eccli. Tr. by Sarah Ardizzone. 2025. Eerdmans. K–Gr. 3.

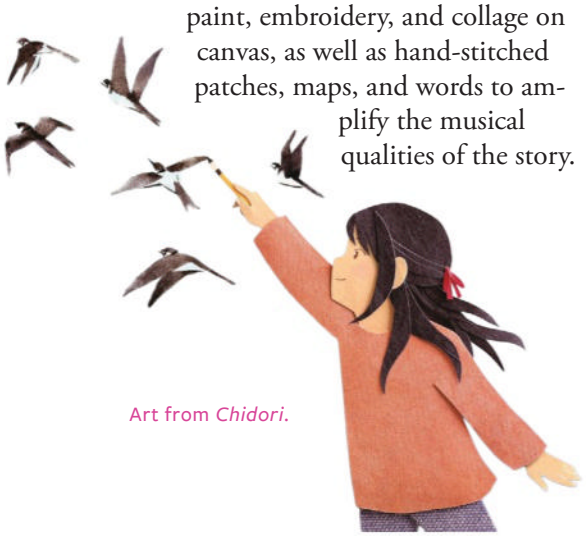
Eccli uses real knitting needles and yarn mixed with colored-pencil drawings to capture the experience of immigration from one home to another and how pieces of our old homes (literal and figurative) stay with and guide us.

Wolfboy. By Andy Harkness. Illus. by the author. 2021. Bloomsbury. PreS–Gr. 2.

Harkness harnesses his impressive animation career to share the story of a hungry little wolf, painstakingly created with hand-formed clay and then photographed to yield textural and 3-D images with striking use of shadow and light.

Yellow Dog Blues. By Alice Faye Duncan. Illus. by Chris Raschka. 2022. Eerdmans. K–Gr. 3.

Though the premise of a boy in search of his lost dog is simple, the execution is so much more in this exploration of blues music, captured with a combination of fabric paint, embroidery, and collage on canvas, as well as hand-stitched patches, maps, and words to amplify the musical qualities of the story.



Art from *Chidori.*

Top 10

Picture-Book Read-Alouds

Whether they serve up jaunty rhythms, interactive elements, or conversation starters, the following picture books offer extra utility when read aloud, either in a one-on-one or group setting.

Bird Rehearsal. By Jonah Winter. Illus. by Stacy Innerst. 2024. Cameron Kids. PreS–Gr. 2.

This unconventional story is told entirely through birdsong over the course of a day. Readers will delight in sounding out the creatively conceptualized chirps and squawks of various birds.

Dog vs. Strawberry. By Nelly Buchet. Illus. by Andrea Zuill. 2024. Random House Studio. PreS–Gr. 2.

In an epic living-room race, narration executed as sports commentary delivers the hilarious play-by-play of a dog facing off against a strawberry. Guaranteed to delight audiences big and small.

Let's Be Bees. By Shawn Harris. Illus. by the author. 2025. Holiday/Neal Porter. PreS–Gr. 1.

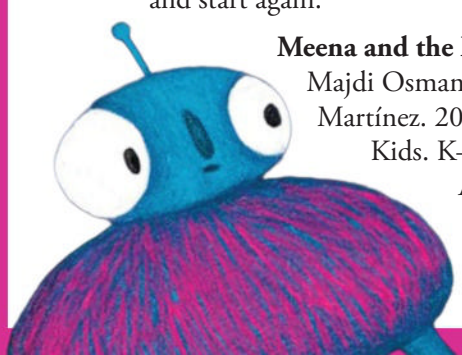
In this charming, inventive take on the read-aloud experience, a father and child embark on a journey of "being" by becoming different animals, natural phenomena, and even each other.

A Map for Falasteen: A Palestinian Child's Search for Home. By Maysa Odeh. Illus. by Aliaa Betawi. 2024. Holt. K–Gr. 3.

At school, Falasteen can't find Palestine on the map, which sparks her search for answers—and important conversations for readers.

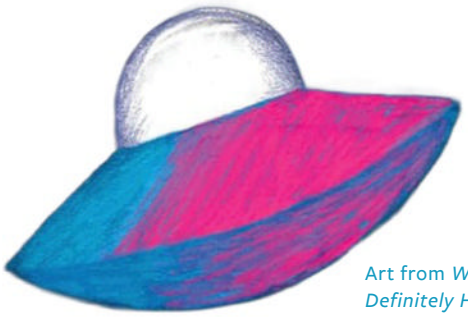
Mr. Fox's Game of No! By David LaRochelle. Illus. by Mike Wohnoutka. 2024. Candlewick. PreS–Gr. 2.

Mr. Fox engages kids in his new game by stating its cardinal rule: "Every time I ask a question, you have to say "NO." Those who say "YES" must return to the beginning and start again.



Meena and the Microbiome. By Majdi Osman. Illus. by Teresa Martínez. 2025. Candlewick/MIT Kids. K–Gr. 2.

A trip to the backyard by Meena and her mother leads to a discussion of microbes and their many helpful properties. Dialogue-heavy text makes this an outstanding STEM read-aloud.



Art from *We Are Definitely Human.*

Onomatopanda. By Janik Coat. Illus. by the author. 2024. Abrams/Appleseed. PreS.

This fun, witty board book's adorable and often funny illustrations follow a panda through its day, each page focusing on one action, accompanied by one evocative onomatopoeia.

Pasta Pasta Lotsa Pasta. By Aimee Lucido. Illus. by Mavisu Demirag. 2024. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane. PreS–Gr. 2.

A family makes pasta—a *lot* of pasta—for hungry relatives in this playful picture book with an infectious, bouncing rhyme scheme revolving around a panoply of different pastas.

Ursula Upside Down. By Corey R. Tabor. Illus. by the author. 2024. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray. PreS–Gr. 2.

In this clever, heartfelt crowd-pleaser, catfish Ursula is content to swim upside down until another fish questions her perspective and she's thrown for a loop.

We Are Definitely Human. By X. Fang. Illus. by the author. 2024. Tundra. PreS–Gr. 3.

After a trio of aliens crashes on Earth, they absurdly pretend to be human as they work to repair their ship. The silly story and lovely artwork provide a charming blend of humor and heart.

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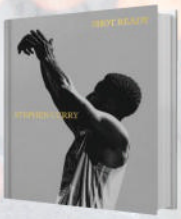

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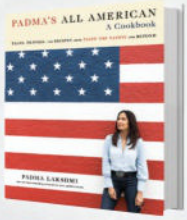

Padma Lakshmi
PADMA'S ALL AMERICAN: TALES, TRAVELS, AND RECIPES FROM TASTE THE NATION AND BEYOND: A COOKBOOK

Filled with mouth-watering recipes—along with profiles and stories from the people who inspired the dishes, *Padma's All American* is a joyful book. A reflection of who we truly are as a nation, from one of our most essential culinarians.

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Matt Dinniman
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Carl and Princess Donut are ready to battle it out in the epic seventh book in the *New York Times* bestselling Dungeon Crawler Carl series—now with bonus material exclusive to this print edition.

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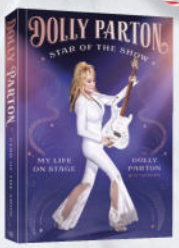
FOR MUSIC LOVERS



Dolly Parton
STAR OF THE SHOW: MY LIFE ON STAGE

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FOR AUSTEN'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

Jane Austen with a foreword by Catriona Gourlay
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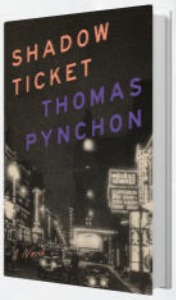

Thomas Pynchon
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The new novel from Thomas Pynchon, bestselling and award-winning author of *Gravity's Rainbow*, *Vineland*, and *Inherent Vice*. "A literary triumph . . . A gloriously language-driven detective novel that waits for no one." —*The Boston Globe*

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